

The next generation stepping out on a new path in agricultural industry

Lynsey Pack



AT the start of a new project, you are never quite sure how it will play out but bringing together 12 total strangers in the boardroom of the Regional Agricultural Centre at the Great Yorkshire

Showground recently was a great experience.

The first 'Pathfinders' on the Yorkshire Agricultural Society's new Goodall Agri-Development Pathway met each other for the first time at the society's HQ in Harrogate just before Easter.

These 12 individuals are all aged in their 20s and 30s, are based across the North of England and come from different backgrounds and stages of involvement in agriculture, whether as relative newcomers to the industry or from families with generations of farming heritage.

Despite their varied experiences to date, they have discovered that they share much in common, and that big agricultural issues and changes in the industry bind them together. As they talked about their careers so far, it was wonderful to hear them offering useful insights to each other from their own experiences. Peer-to-peer support can be so valuable.

It was inspiring to meet our Pathfinders and hear their personal motivations for getting involved. These are challenging times for the industry, so the conviction and enthusiasm they all have for pursuing agricultural careers is so positive. Challenges also breed opportunities, and I don't think we should ever doubt the capacity of the next generation to see those opportunities and seize them, with the right support.

Our first group of Pathfinders are already demonstrating a really positive attitude towards developing their agricultural careers, and this is what our new Pathway is all about.

Thanks to the generosity of the late Mary Goodall, the Yorkshire Agricultural Society is funding an annual training programme to develop the confidence and knowledge of younger people in farming to support them in their career aspirations.

The Goodall Agri-Development Pathway consists of eight modules covering topics from working effectively as a team and business development, to leadership, diversification and farm innovation.

The society has settled on the format and content of the Pathway following consultation with a wider group of younger agricultural professionals in Yorkshire who generously gave up their time last year to inform the development stage.

Whatever stage you are at in your own agricultural journey, the society offers opportunities through our farm-

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ing networks. The Future Farmers of Yorkshire is a thriving network of more than 1,000 forward-thinking farmers, vets and other industry professionals which is open to all.

The network's Spring Debate in March gave Future Farmers the chance to catch up with each other socially and hear from an inspiring panel of speakers talking about finding a balance between profitable food production and managing farmland for environmental benefits.

Our Women In Farming Network connects rural women who may otherwise feel isolated from one another due to geography, and family and work commitments, while our newly-launched Yorkshire Farmers Club organises free industry visits for more senior members of the farming community who are still actively farming.

There is more information about everything we do to support and champion agriculture and farming families on our website, yas.co.uk.

As we move through the year ahead, I am looking forward to seeing the Goodall Agri-Development Pathway's impact on our first Pathfinders. It is exciting to see the connections they are already making with one another, and it has been another happy reminder of the value in bringing people together.

This is a sponsored column by Lynsey Pack, Head of Charitable Activities and Partnerships at the Yorkshire Agricultural Society.

The value of making a pre-nuptial agreement

Kim Fellowes



WITH over two thirds of couples now cohabiting, the family unit is changing quite significantly. Whilst the pandemic had an impact on people's ability

to get married as so many weddings were postponed, the cost-of-living crisis is also now having a huge impact, as couples who may wish to get married simply can't afford to.

Another changing characteristic is the number of people who do get married entering into prenuptial agreements, something which in the past was seen as something only for the rich and famous. Many individuals who now marry, enter into such an agreement, particularly if they have been married before, or there is some family wealth that they may receive in the future.

It is also particularly relevant in the farming community, or in families whereby land or a business is involved. When a marriage breaks down and the running of a farm is impacted, it can have a much wider impact not just on the couple, but on generations of the farming family.

Or in this respect increasingly, parents are making plans in transferring the farming business to the younger generation by making it a condition that their children (and their spouses) enter into a prenuptial agreement (if they are planning to get married) or a postnuptial agreement (if they are already married). The goal being to ensure the farm does not get broken up, and continues to stay within the family, and fully functioning for future generations.

The objectives of prenuptial and postnuptial agreements are the same. They clarify how the parties will conduct their financial affairs during their marriage. They provide certainty for couples who wish to formally agree how their assets should be divided if they later separate or divorce.

Provided it is prepared properly by a family lawyer, the existence of a nuptial agreement can be given decisive weight in the event of a challenge.

Getting proper advice before entering into any such agreement is so important though, ensuring full consideration is given to all aspects of the marriage.

This is a sponsored column by Kim Fellowes, partner at Silk Family Law. Contact kim.fellowes@silkfamilylaw.co.uk or call 0191 500 0777.

Dales can become a beacon of inclusivity

Mohammed Dhalech



MY journey with National Parks began in the 1980s as a student in Ilkley, where I first explored the Dales. Its rugged beauty and serene landscapes captivated me, yet even then, I couldn't help but

notice the lack of engagement from ethnically diverse communities.

As I revisited the park over the years, this disparity remained unchanged, igniting a passion within me to advocate for inclusivity in one of Yorkshire's most treasured landscapes.

While progress has been slow, there are positive signs emerging. Stakeholders in and around the Dales are beginning to recognise the urgent need for transformation.

Inspired by the vision highlighted by DEFRA's Landscapes Review (Glover 2019), there's a growing momentum to ensure that the Dales evolves into a space where nature flourishes and people from all walks of life feel welcome. Recent months have seen the emer-

gence of initiatives, such as Black Girls Hike, Muslim Hikers, Mosaic Outdoors, and in Cave Rescue Organisation, which have all engaged new and diverse audiences in the park, aimed at bridging the gap between the landscapes and diverse communities. While challenges persist, there's a tangible sense of determination to overcome them.

The journey towards inclusivity is multifaceted, requiring a concerted effort to address organisational culture, representation, and racism within the landscapes and stakeholders. Partners must foster a culture that celebrates diversity and champions inclusivity at every level. Representation within the landscapes must go beyond superficial measures, ensuring all voices and experiences are heard.

Moreover, there must be zero tolerance for racism or discrimination in any form.

Despite these challenges, there's a prevailing sense of optimism. The Dales has the potential to become a shining example of inclusivity, where every visitor feels a sense of belonging amidst its breathtaking landscapes. As we celebrate its rich heritage and natural beauty, there's a unique opportu-

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nity to shape its future as a beacon of inclusivity.

Some areas such as Malham, Grassington, Horton in Ribblesdale to name a few, have seen a positive shift towards a more diverse visitor base, creating a sense of belonging that increases the wider community's connectedness with nature and encourages active involvement in protecting the landscapes.

Imagine a vibrant and alive Dales, where people from all backgrounds come together to celebrate its beauty. Picture a landscape where every visitor is welcomed with open arms, where the rich mosaic of experience is celebrated and cherished.

This vision is within reach, but it requires dedication and collaboration from all stakeholders. The Yorkshire Dales must not only embrace inclusivity but champion it as a core value.

The road ahead may be challenging, but the rewards of a truly inclusive Dales are immeasurable. Together, let us forge a future where everyone feels welcome and valued amidst Yorkshire's stunning landscapes.

Mohammed Dhalech, trustee, Friends of the Dales.