 Gate **Cheshire Smallholders**  **May 2016**

**President’s Preamble**

**Hi Members,**

**I must report that our retired Chairman and his wife have now moved to the other side of the UK. I gather they may be living in their Campervan as they have not yet purchased a new home. They are however with all their family and can only wish them a successful move. I must of course thank them for all the work they have done on our behalf. My memory says that Tony has had three very successful periods as Chairman. He held the Association on course and ensured our future at the time.**

**Our recent meetings have been reasonably well attended and useful. A selected number of members had a meeting with representatives from Defra and they presented our views on becoming smallholders and in particular how we ensure our stock is in good health. We will get a copy of their report and will let you see it when received.**

**Our visit to the Cheshire Wildlife Trust farm at Bickley was well attended; the group were taken over the 200 acre farm and given explanations as to what was happening to each field. If you get an opportunity to go there it is well worth the time. The Trust is no longer doing conservation grazing around Cheshire, mainly because of the new T.B. rules. They are concentrating now on conservation of their home farm and collecting data for scientific research.**

**I do however have to report that our Committee is currently severely reduced with members having to retire for practical family and home reasons. They are all remaining members and there are no internal disputes or difficulties. Apart from myself there are now only three others, Lawrence, our Treasurer and Membership Secretary, Gill, our Minutes Secretary and David who is covering everything else.**

**It is my intention to write to you all before our September meeting setting out our individual views as to our practical future if we cannot increase Committee numbers. I can assure you that our finances are still in good heart and being well looked after.**

**I will be writing reports on the individual recent retirements shortly.**

**My Best Wishes,**

**Arthur T. Green. President**

**Committee**

Arthur Green (President) 01270 841288

Lawrence Beard (Treasurer & Membership Secretary) 01625 572324

Gill Lawson (Secretary) 01928 788289

David Golding (Web Editor & Vice Chairman) 01270 528790

Gillian Murty (Membership Communications)

Vacant Training Co-ordinator

Vacant Community liaison

Vacant Web Assistant

If you would like to get involved in the committee and can spare an hour or so each month please contact Arthur. No specialist skills are required and first and foremost we allocate tasks to people that they will enjoy doing.

**Dates for your diary**

**Notice of the AGM of the Cheshire Smallholders Association.**

The AGM will be held on Monday 31st October, if you have a topic you would like to include in the AGM agenda, please contact a committee member.

**2016 – 2017 Reaseheath meetings**

September 26th 2016, October 31st 2016 (AGM), November 28th 2016, December 2016 - No meeting, January 30th 2017, February 27th 2017, March 27th 2017, April 24th 2017, May 2017 – site visit

If you would like to suggest a lecture topic and/or speaker please contact us at admin@cheshiresmallholders.org.uk

Doors open **7.30 for 8pm** start. Come early to have a cup of tea/coffee and a chat. Sales table and advert board for those items too difficult to bring are available. Find us at: Room L3, The Leverhulme Centre, Reaseheath College, Nantwich, Cheshire, CW5 6DF. The Leverhulme Centre is on the right (from the B5074 entrance) just before the car park barrier.

**Events Diary 2016**

June

Staffordshire County Show
Staffordshire Show Ground, Stafford, Wednesday 1st and Thursday 2nd June [www.staffscountyshowground.co.uk](http://www.staffscountyshowground.co.uk)

Evening Smallholders Fur & Feather Sale, Wednesday 15 June, starts 5.30pm

www.wrightmarshall.co.uk

Cheshire Show
Tabley Showground, Knutsford, Tuesday 21st - Wednesday 22nd June
[www.cheshirecountyshow.org.uk](http://www.cheshirecountyshow.org.uk)

Middlewich Folk and Boat Festival, Friday 17th - Sunday 19th June [www.midfest.org.uk](http://www.midfest.org.uk)

Woolfest
Mitchell's Lakeland Livestock Centre, Cockermouth, Cumbria CA13 0QQ. Friday 24th - Saturday 25 June, [www.woolfest.co.uk](http://www.woolfest.co.uk/)

Kelsall Steam Rally
Saturday 25th - Sunday 26th June

[www.kelsallsteamrally.co.uk](http://www.kelsallsteamrally.co.uk)

July

Forest Live, Delamere Forest, Friday 1st July, Paul Heaton & Jacqui Abbott,

Saturday 2nd July, Simply Red

www.forestry.gov.uk/delamere

CarFest North, Bolesworth Castle, Tattenhall, Friday 29th to Sunday 31st July

www.carfest.org

Rare Breeds Weekend, Tatton Park, Saturday 16th July to Sunday 17th July

www.tattonpark.org.uk

Royal Welsh Show
Royal Welsh Showground, Llanelwedd, Builth Wells, LD2 3SY, Monday 18th July - Thursday 21st July
[www.rwas.co.uk/royal-welsh-show](http://www.rwas.co.uk/royal-welsh-show/)

RHS Show Tatton Park
Tatton Park, Wednesday 20th - Sunday 24th July

[www.rhs.org.uk](http://www.rhs.org.uk)

Nantwich Show, Dorfold Park, Nantwich, Wednesday 27th July [www.nantwichshow.co.uk](http://www.nantwichshow.co.uk)

.August

Bakewell Show
Bakewell Showground, Wednesday 3rd - Thursday 4th August
[www.bakewellshow.org.uk](http://www.bakewellshow.org.uk)

Anglesey County Show
Anglesey Showground, Tuesday 9th and Wednesday 10th August [www.angleseyshow.org.uk](http://www.angleseyshow.org.uk)

Traditional Country Weekend, Tatton Park, Sat 27th- Mon 29th Aug

www.tattonpark.org.uk

Denbigh & Flint Show, The Green, Denbigh, LL16 4UB, Thursday 18 August [www.denbighandflintshow.com](http://www.denbighandflintshow.com)

September

**RBST Show & Sale, Chelford,** Saturday 24th September.

Details and entry forms will be available from Wright Marshall LLP Contact 01625 861122

Mount Pleasant Gardens Sculpture, Kelsall, throughout the month,

www.mountpleasantgardens.co.uk

Yesteryear Rally, Hampton, Malpas, Saturday 10 September

[www.malpas-yesteryear-rally.co.uk](http://www.malpas-yesteryear-rally.co.uk)

Cheshire Ploughing Match, Ashley Hall Farm, Hale, Altrincham WA14 3QA, Wednesday 28th September, www.cheshireploughing.co.uk

October

Autumn Deer Walks, Tatton Park, Tuesday 18th, Wednesday 19th & Wednesday 28th

October

www.tattonpark.org.uk

November

Willow Weaving, Saturday 12th & Christmas Wreath Making, Saturday 26th

November

www.tattonpark.org.uk

**Always check with organisers before making arrangements or travelling, shows can be cancelled at the last minute – or dates changed - due to weather conditions etc.**

**Subscriptions**

Subscriptions will shortly be due for 2016/17, if you have not yet done so & would like to pay by standing order, a form can be downloaded from the membership page on our website, [www.cheshiresmallholders.org.uk](http://www.cheshiresmallholders.org.uk).

Any new members joining the association over the summer will benefit from extended membership up to September 2017. Existing members’ subscriptions for 2016 – 2017 are due on 1st September 2016. For further details, email members@cheshiresmallholders.org.uk or telephone Lawrence, the Treasurer and Membership Secretary on 01625 572324.

## NVZ reminder

PLANET (Planning Land Applications of Nutrients for Efficiency and the Environment) is a software tool for use by farmers for assessing and demonstrating compliance with these rules. It was recommended by our speaker from Hafren

Water at our November meeting & is available free of charge as a download from

[www.planet4farmers.co.uk](http://www.planet4farmers.co.uk)

**Cheshire Wildlife Trust**

I joined the Cheshire Wildlife Trust, when they gave us a talk at one of our monthly meetings at Reaseheath & have been a member for a few years now. As they say, they are “the only non-government funded environmental charity dedicated to the conservation of wildlife and wild places across Cheshire.”

Membership fees vary but for example, a joint membership for two adults living at the same address is a minimum of £3.20 per month if paying by Direct Debit. As it is a charity you can choose to donate more if you wish.

They are based at Bickley Hall Farm in Malpas, the site of May’s visit. CWT put on lots of activities for members from talks to walks and other activities.

Of interest to members will be the programme of special events they have set up giving practical experience in workshops on a variety of subjects.

Some that caught my eye were;

**Beekeeping** - Saturday 25th June 2016, Bickley Hall Farm (£35)

**Erecting Stock Fencing** - Wednesday 28th September 2016, Bickley Hall Farm (Free)

**Hedge Laying -** Monday 7th November, Gowy Meadows (Free)

**Orchard Pruning -** Wednesday 23rd November, Bickley Hall Farm (Free)

If any of these training days appeal to you, you can join CWT via their website, [www.cheshirewildlife.org.uk](http://www.cheshirewildlife.org.uk)

**Cross Compliance 2016**

The Cross Compliance document for England has been updated, the 2016 guidance is available at:-

<https://assets.digital.cabinet-office.gov.uk/media/5684e7dbe5274a0367000002/Guide_to_cross_compliance_2016_-_v_1.0.pdf>

It is well worth clicking and saving the document to your computer desktop (before the link moves!!). The link above is easily located if you Google “cross compliance 2016”

There are several amendments to the Good Agricultural and Environmental Conditions (GAECs) and Statutory Management Requirements (SMRs), since the 2015 cross compliance document, so well worth a recap.

**Defra Focus Group**

Following the Defra focus group on animal welfare in April and the presentation from Merewyn Loder at Reaseheath in April, Merewyn has provided several links that our members will find useful.

The feedback from Lewis Holloway, the researcher from Hull University who led the focus group was very positive and when we have received their summary report we will upload it to the CSA website.

<http://www.nadis.org.uk/>

 An industry-led website for information about all sorts of endemic diseases and how to manage them.

<http://www.scops.org.uk/>

SCOPS – a website about managing parasites and drug resistance.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/animal-diseases-international-monitoring>

 International disease risk.

<http://ahvla.defra.gov.uk/vet-gateway/index.html>

APHA provides a diagnostic service for vets and their clients, they have species specific veterinary groups who provide advice and cascade information.

**Poultry Drinkers**

Did you know you can get an automatic drinking trough especially for poultry?

I have tried various poultry drinkers over the years, plastic and metal and all seem to have had their drawbacks from being awkward to fill, to leaking if not on perfectly level ground, never mind being needed to be refilled frequently especially in hot weather.

I have now discovered a galvanised poultry drinking trough with a ball cock that is plumbed into the mains water supply, just like a mini cattle trough so it refills automatically as required - no more having to replenish drinkers manually!

If you are lucky enough to have a handy water supply I highly recommend one.

I got mine from Green Valley Poultry Supplies, (www.chicken-house.co.uk) for £59.08 and consider it an investment as should last for many years and save considerable time.

On their website the picture does not show the trough lid for some reason and it also states that the ball cock needs to be purchased separately, whereas mine actually came complete with one. The only thing to bear in mind that as with any galvanised drinker it is not suitable for adding apple cider vinegar to the water as it is acidic and will corrode the metal.

**Thinking of turkeys for Christmas?**

## New regulations were adopted in October 2015 regarding welfare at the time of slaughter. A reminder: -

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/welfare-of-animals-at-the-time-of-killing>

## “Cervical (neck) dislocation - You can manually dislocate birds’ necks if the birds up to 3kg (up to 70 birds a day) and you can dislocate birds’ necks mechanically if they weight between 3kg and 5kg. You must only use these methods if there are no other methods available.”

## The guidance explains acceptable methods for larger birds.

**Brewery Tour**

Some of the committee members plan to go to the Spitting Feathers brewery in Waverton on 10th September 2016, for a social get together at one of the brewery's Saturday afternoon “Brewbarn Sessions”.

To quote Spitting Feathers' website, “Brewbarn Sessions are Saturday afternoons of beer, food, music & laughs at Spitting Feathers HQ.” They have “brewery tours, food from the farm, live music &, of course, lots of beer.”

The session starts at 2.00pm and finish at around 6.00pm. It will be interesting to discover how this Cheshire brewer began and has now established itself as a local leader.

Tickets for the session itself are only £20 from the Brewery Tap or £25 via the website and this covers everything - Spitting feathers add, "You don’t need *any* money on the day." (My italics).

http://spittingfeathers.org/brewbarn-sessions/

If you are interested, please let David know (01270 528790) , as we may be able to co-ordinate transport or arrange a minibus at cost if enough people from one locality want to visit. This will be a very popular open event at the brewery, if you plan to go, advance booking is recommended.

**More cheese Grommit?**

Several members have requested training on cheese making and we have found out about a cheese making course to be held at Claremont Farm in Bebington, Wirral, on Sunday 21st August 2016. It runs from 10 till 4 & costs £75 including lunch & refreshments. If you would like to attend, please book direct with Claremont Farm; full details can be found by using the following link:

<http://www.claremontfarm.co.uk/cheese-making-with-guy-dimelo-chorlton-cheese-2-2/>

**Adverts**

**Rotovator wanted** - Ideally a Howard gem or similar. Call Rosie on 07770 783980.

**Beulah x Teeswater Ewes** - 2 x 1 Shear - 2 x 2 Shear, not previously tupped. Heptivaced annually. Good strong ewes, good for butchers' lambs. Contact Rob. 07958 647045.

**Hay 2015 for sale** - home grown and barn stored, Kingsley area. May be able to deliver. Contact Gill on 077933 767994

**Electrician -** Electroworks Ltd can undertake all your domestic, commercial and agricultural electrical work, from an additional socket to a complete rewire. Have you thought about a wireless switch or PIR sensor for your outside lights or additional security lighting? Also inspection and testing (PIRs/EICs) and PAT testing. Part P registered, fully insured Contact Kevin: Tel 077737 80722 or 01244 422322. Free quotations.

**Sheep shearing and husbandry services.**  Reliable, clean, gentle and friendly husbandry by British Wool Marketing Board blue seal trained stockman.   Typical cost around £30 for ten sheep, depending on distance travelled from Sandbach.  Please contact Tim on 07540 421571 or email farmertim@btinternet.com. Basic training and demonstration also available for small groups of 6-8 people, at your smallholding, with your sheep, at £100 for a four hour session.

**Logs for sale** - Barn dried and stored, small net bags, builder’s bags or trailer loads. Free local delivery. Call Mike on 0771 476 8164 or Chris on 0787 102 4275. Helsby area.

**Hay & straw** - Small bales or large round bales. Good quality and dry. Call Mike on 0771 476 8164 or Chris on 0787 102 4275. Helsby area.

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**Members may advertise in “The Gate” magazine & on our website for free & adverts can be emailed to admin@cheshiresmallholders.org.uk. Please mention Cheshire Smallholders Association when replying to adverts.**

**Charity Appeal**

David Golding climbed Kilimanjaro in January and set up a just giving page for the Downs Syndrome Association. One of David’s friends’ children is supported by a local branch of the DSA. If you feel like supporting his cause, the just giving page is still open at <https://www.justgiving.com/David-Golding5/> .

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