



## Norfolk Rural Support Network

Dear Friends

### **Seminar –Monday, 9<sup>th</sup> November 2015, 10.00am for 10.30am** **The Future of Rural and Farming Communities**

I am writing on behalf of the Network to invite you to the above seminar, details of which are enclosed. We do hope you will be able to attend this event. If you have a colleague who you think would find this interesting please feel free to invite them to come as well – or instead of yourself if you are unable to attend.

**Stephen Askew** has lived in Old Buckenham all his life. He attended Easton College and has been farming all his life. He believes passionately in local representation and the rural way of life. He spent 12 years on Old Buckenham PC as he believes that local people have a better understanding of their area needs and deserve to be heard. He has been an advocate of this since 2003 representing different parishes ,with five of those years on the Cabinet. Stephen is concerned that villages are in danger of becoming dormant with few chances for future generations and he believes that village shops, pubs and organisations are vital in helping promote community spirit. He believes that people should come before politics and is at his happiest when tackling local issues for individuals and communities alike.

**Dr Tony Wilson** is a senior lecturer and programme manager of HE Agriculture at Easton/Otley College who also co-ordinates the operations of the Centre for Contemporary Agriculture. A considerable part of his career has been spent working in the applied agricultural research sector in organisations like the John Innes Centre and the Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique. Tony is an experienced educator and well understands the link between learning and teaching at all levels. His current research interests are the suitability of AD for Norfolk agriculture, the adoption of new technologies on farming and the impact of scientific research on agricultural productivity. He states that while technology and new ways of production are constant forces in farming there are certain periods of history when they bring about huge changes to farming practices, production levels, rural communities and the national significance of farming .This seminar will focus on some of the new technologies, their current and potential future impact and how might our rural communities change in response to these technological advances.

**Emily Page**, 25, has just returned back to the family farm near Great Yarmouth, Norfolk and has recently been in the media talking about the challenges she faces. 'The farm has been in the family for over 100 years now. I will be the fourth generation to take it over. I trained to be a graphic designer but I realised I wasn't happy and I was choosing to go ploughing rather than sit at a sketchbook-so I went back to my roots'. Emily wants to encourage more young people to pursue a career in agriculture. She has just completed her Teleporter handling course and is working hard to rebrand the family's fruit farm at Scratby. Emily is an Assistant Royal Norfolk Show Steward ,a natural officer at the National Institute of Agricultural Botany at Morley, near Wymondham.She is also a county press officer for the Norfolk YFC and a member of Stalham Farmers Club. She is the chairman of her YFC at North Walsham . She has also completed a 4day trek through the Sahara Desert to raise money for the Norfolk Charity 'YANA'(You Are Not Alone).She is planning other fundraising events in the coming months.

It is hoped that various rural crafts will have a stand at the seminar and make a formal contribution to the 'open' time which follows the presentations.

The seminars are about highlighting issues and sharing information and good practice. Following the main presentations there will be the usual time for questions, contributions and discussion. Also, if you have a stand or any leaflets or information about your work which you would like to be able to distribute at the seminar, please bring these with you.

The following may be helpful in finding the venue. Wreningham is to the east of Wymondham and just south of Mulbarton.If you are approaching from Norwich on the B1113, pass the Bird in Hand PH on the right hand side, half a mile down the road you will come to a minor crossroads. Turn right into Mill Lane then less than half a mile the village hall is situated on the left.

The reply slip needs to be returned to me by **2 November** 2015. In the meantime, if you have any queries, I can be contacted on 01603 732886 or 07990573166. I look forward to seeing you on the 9<sup>th</sup> November 2015.

Yours sincerely

Betty