Report for The Nineveh Trust on the 2016-2017 Norfolk Young Farmers and Countrysiders Year

It has been an action packed year for the Norfolk Young Farmers and Countrysiders. It is pleasing to be able to report that the Countrysiders have had a range of club meetings, joined in with competitions, received training and have had a successful and Conservation Campout.

Club Meetings

The varied club programmes have included:

- a talk and demonstration of Birds of Prey
- farm visits
- a talk and hands on experience from Bert's Amazing Creatures where members are given the chance to handle animals from rabbits and hedgehogs through to the slightly more terrifying boa's.
- sports and games nights to provide a 'hook' to those not so used to the outside world and natural environment
- competition preparation which is training by another name!

Club programmes retain their focus on education and achievement through fun and, as is evident from the photos and comments below, the visits and farm tours remain popular.

- "Both girls love being members, 'A' particularly enjoyed the visit by the vet…" Parental comment.
- "Just wanted to say thank you for organising the farm visit last night. 'M' really enjoyed it and was absolutely full of everything when he got home!!! We go past the farm everyday on our way to school so interesting to know what goes on there." Parental comment.

Competitions

Competitions have been well attended by Countryside and Senior Club members. They have included skill competitions of sawing wood and bale stacking as shown below; knowledge competitions such as bird identification, crop identification and lambing quizzes as well as stock judging which combines skill and knowledge.

Competitions are a valuable tool for education within the organisation and enable young people to partake in activities and learning that may otherwise not have been possible. The competitions also add an element of fun to the training and as demonstrated in the quote below a sense of achievement. Personal development and enhanced self-esteem are also positive outcomes of participation in these events.

An email reply from a parent in response to a message of congratulation from Moira Harrison, Countrysiders Development Officer:

Thank you so much for your e-mail. We were shocked by his win, especially as the night before the show he was crying and saying he couldn't do it (stock judging) because he couldn't spell the right words.
Countrysiders and particularly Amber are giving Harry such a self confidence boost and we are so grateful for everything that you all do to make the clubs work.

Training

There has been an excellent up take for the Countrysiders Courses with 38 under 16s enjoying Beginner Tractor Driving, Lambing and Agricultural Engineering provided in partnership with Easton and Otley College (Agricultural College) and a Dairy Course run by ourselves for the first time. Feedback from all the courses has been outstanding with 88% reporting that the course was 'excellent' and 12% reporting that the course was 'good'. The comments below illustrate the positive outcomes for these young people and how the organisation helps to influence their aspirations.

- "I really want to go here" North Walsham Countrysider in response to the question 'would you recommend Easton and Otley College?'
- "I found the course extremely enjoyable with the perfect amount of practical, bookwork and break time." Harleston Countrysider in response 'to do you have any other comments about the tractor course.'
- "…'O' absolutely loved doing the tractor course and finally mastered reversing a trailer today" Parental comment after their child attended the training.

Conservation Campout

This year's campout was situated in Carleton Forehoe, a historically interesting area of Norfolk, of four hills where the hundred court was held in the Saxon times. The Countrysiders were engaged in many conservation activities; bridge building, alder cutting and bundling, fence panel making, building a Giant 's Causeway and owl box and natural habitat nest box construction. Fifty-eight members attended the three day camp and as well as being busy with the tasks they listened to a talk by a gamekeeper, went on a bat walk with a local expert and saw a moth trap in action. The emphasis is on conservation, raising awareness of the countryside and the natural environment and how these can be protected and enhanced. The campout is led by a conservation expert.

Owl Box Construction

Before

After

Fence Panel Construction

Natural habitat boxes

Giants Causeway (Bug Hotel)

One of the members with a moth 'friend' from the trap. The moth stayed with her all day.

The message below from a parent after the Conservation Campout also goes some way to demonstrate the added benefits that countrysiders bring the individual - a sense of achievement and personal development. These are not always the outcomes that we aim for with the conservation work but they are a value added benefit which hopefully lead to the member recalling the positive experience and therefore stimulating their interest in the natural environment.

> Just had to send a message to say a HUGE thank you to all involved in the amazing camp this weekend!
> 'M' had an absolutely fantastic time and as I sit here writing this she is still talking about the fun she had!!
> Thanks for giving 'M' what is being described as 'THE BEST TIME EVER'
> Oh and she'd already like to book a place for next year please!

Survey

The membership survey work started at the beginning of the membership year in September 2016. Five hundred and eighteen members responded to the survey with 43 stating that they were not from a family were any adult has a land based career but that they were in or had aspirations to choose this career for themselves. 44% of these 43 respondents are Countrysiders. As these members move through the organisation we will track them to see if they achieve these aspirations as well as tracking other member's opinions to see if there is a change. What the survey will not be able to monitor in the longer term is those members who do not ultimately have a land based career but who have an increased knowledge about and an active interest in the natural environment.

In summation Norfolk YFC and Countrysiders have had a successful and productive year attending many meetings, events and participating in competitions. The words from the Countrysiders below summarise what they gain from the organisation it terms of education and personal development.

The most valuable thing I get from Countrysiders is:

gaining new skills

opportunity

confidence

life skills and friends

PREPARING MY FUTURE IN AGRICULTURAL LIFE

"On behalf of Norfolk YFC I would like to thank the Nineveh Trust for their support which has enabled the members to gain skills, to experience new opportunities and to grow in confidence." Becca Horner, Norfolk YFC Chairlady