



THE FARMING LIFE CENTRE

SUPPORTING FARMING & RURAL LIFE
IN THE PEAK DISTRICT

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SUPPORTING FARMING & RURAL
LIFE IN THE PEAK DISTRICT

PAST • PRESENT • FUTURE

Providing health, well-being and business support to the rural community through befriending, social groups and activities, workshops, farm walks, training events, talks and one-one support.

Find us every Monday at the Agricultural Business Centre
in Bakewell

www.thefarminglifecentre.org.uk

Dear FLC Friend,

As we move into autumn, many farming businesses are facing a season of mixed emotions. The disappointment surrounding SFI 2026 applications has left many farmers feeling frustrated and uncertain about future plans, while a challenging summer brought difficulties for grazing, forage production and farm operations.

Concerns around Bluetongue continue to weigh heavily on livestock farms, adding further pressure at an already demanding time. We recognise the worry this brings and want to remind everyone that support is available and that our rural communities are strongest when we look out for one another.

Attention is now turning to the months ahead, with sheep sales underway, tups heading out, cattle coming in for winter housing, and livestock farmers focusing on breeding, feed supplies and animal health. Encouragingly, the recent flush of grass growth has helped improve grazing conditions, and many farms have been able to secure good fodder stocks for the winter.

We hope the season ahead brings settled weather, healthy livestock and reasons for optimism as we head towards the end of the year.

Rachel Metcalfe

Baby News - Alice & Charlie Bettney have safely welcomed a beautiful baby boy - Henry Micheal. They are doing very well, and some of the FLC team have already enjoyed baby cuddles! We look forward to seeing them out and about soon and wish the whole family every happiness as they begin this wonderful new chapter. ❤️

WELCOME EMMA

Emma Beresford has joined The Farming Life Centre team to look after our Peak Men in Farming and Peak Women in Ag projects, as well as the Ashford Rural Social Group, while Alice is on maternity leave.

Emma says:

"I've had a truly wonderful three months since stepping in to cover for Alice, and it has been such a pleasure to get involved and get to know everyone a little better. From the very beginning, I've been made to feel incredibly welcome, and I'm so grateful for all the help, encouragement and support I've received from the team along the way. It has certainly been a busy few months, but also a hugely enjoyable and rewarding experience!"



Royal Countryside Fund - Farm Resilience Workshops

The Farming Life Centre's Farm Resilience Programme, delivered on behalf of The Royal Countryside Fund, has continued to provide local farmers with practical workshops and opportunities to explore some of the key issues facing farm businesses.

Our autumn programme began with a Policy & Funding Update on 9 September, led by Amy Cooper from Chandler Watson. The session looked at the latest policy changes, including SFI26 Windows 1 and 2, available schemes and payments, key deadlines and what the changes could mean for individual farm businesses.

On 23 September, farmers headed out onto the farm for a Biodiversity walk with Chloe Palmer. The session explored how productive farming can work alongside nature, covering habitats and species, grazing management, support for declining species, and building resilience to climate change. The final workshop, held on 8 October, focused on Water Management, with Sophie Harvey. This practical session explored how water moves through a farm, including the management of risks such as flooding, drought and pollution, the protection of watercourses, and how water management can link to available funding.

A Call for Volunteer Befrienders



At The Farming Life Centre, our befriending service connects people within the farming community, offering friendship, companionship and a little practical help along the way. Our wonderful team of volunteer befrienders give their time to visit people who may appreciate some extra company and support. But befriending isn't just rewarding for those receiving a visit, it can enrich the lives of volunteers too.

One of our volunteers, who has been befriending for just over a year, shares their experience:

"From the start we had an honest conversation in which we agreed to be bold enough to say if either of us felt that it wasn't working. Happily a year down the line I can report that it is working. There is always much laughter, chatting and cups of tea with a little practical help thrown in, and I think that I safely speak for both of us when I say that we both look forward to the visit. So for anyone thinking about befriending, just go for it because it really does enrich your life."

We would like to say a huge thank you to all our existing volunteer befrienders for the time, kindness and commitment they give to supporting people in our farming communities. The difference you make is invaluable.

Could you make a difference too? We're keen to hear from people who have a passion for farming and rural life, enjoy a good conversation and have a few hours to spare each month. If you'd like to find out more about becoming a volunteer befriender, we'd love to hear from you. Contact donna@thefarminglifecentre.org.uk for more information

Peak District Men in Farming- Summer Meeting Update

In July, Peak Men in Farming had the fascinating opportunity to visit Bubnell Cliff Farm and learn how its carefully managed grazing system has helped the team successfully produce high-quality beef from their pedigree Longhorn herd. Members enjoyed an informative walk around the fields, seeing the approach in action and hearing more about the work that goes into maintaining both the land and the herd. Afterwards, everyone returned to the farm for a well-earned BBQ, where they were able to sample Bubnell Cliff's own delicious burgers. It was a wonderfully enjoyable and informative evening, and a true farm-to-fork experience from beginning to end.



August seemed to come around in no time, and the group was fortunate to spend a fascinating evening with Geoff Eyre exploring the groundbreaking techniques and restoration methods being used to restore heather and moorland. Members walked out onto Eastern Moor, taking in the landscape and learning more about the careful work involved in protecting and rejuvenating this special environment. The evening was made even more memorable by a beautiful sunset, before everyone headed back to The Travellers Rest to relax over a drink and a well-earned BBQ. It was a wonderfully informative and sociable evening in a truly impressive setting.



September offered another fascinating opportunity, this time to hear from Dovecote Park about its systems, products and the sheer scale of its meat production operation, together with everything involved in bringing those products from the initial stages through to the finished result. The visit gave members a valuable insight into the organisation, expertise and attention to detail required across such a large and complex operation. To round off the occasion, everyone enjoyed a delicious steak meal expertly cooked by The Cow Shed Café—the perfect ending to an informative, enjoyable and very satisfying evening.

Tiny Farmers



Our Tiny Farmers had a lovely meet-up at Hardenclough Farm in Edale! We enjoyed a stroll around the farm, took part in a scavenger hunt and got creative using apples to print beautiful patterns in the orchard. It was a wonderful opportunity for little ones and their grown-ups to enjoy the outdoors together.

Lots of our Tiny Farmers have now flown the nest and started school, but we're always looking for new Tiny Farmers and their grown-ups to join our friendly group. We meet on the second Wednesday of every month, so if you have a little one who loves exploring, nature and farm life, we'd love to see you!

Kids' Club

Our Kids' Clubs are going from strength to strength! We've been running sessions at both Sheen Village Hall and Tideswell Community Hall, welcoming over 45 children in total across the two venues.

The children have enjoyed a fantastic range of creative activities, including building Lego tractors with Lego Dave from Brick Corner, experimenting with sun printing alongside Wild Roots Creative, and creating beautiful countryside canvases with artist Michelle Bird.



Due to popular demand, we're excited to announce that we'll be expanding our Kids' Clubs to a new location at Rowsley Village Hall! We're delighted to be able to offer even more children the opportunity to join in the fun, get creative and enjoy our countryside-themed activities. It's been wonderful to see so many children getting involved, trying new activities and making memories together. We're looking forward to welcoming even more families to our clubs in the months ahead!

Young Farmers

Our Young People's Farming Clubs, which run during lunchtime at local secondary schools, are off to a fantastic start this term! We've welcomed lots of new members at Lady Manners School, Chapel-en-le-Frith High School and Hope Valley College.

The clubs provide a friendly and supportive space for young people from farming backgrounds, as well as those interested in agriculture, to socialise with others who share similar interests, celebrate their rural roots and learn more about the agricultural industry.

We're also excited to announce that we'll be starting a new Farming Club at St Thomas Moore, helping us reach even more young people across the area. Through fun activities, guest speakers and farming trips, we hope to inspire the next generation, introduce them to the wide range of careers and opportunities within agriculture, and help them feel proud of their connection to farming and the countryside.

It's brilliant to see our clubs continuing to grow, and we're looking forward to another exciting term!



Peak Women in Ag

In July, Peak Women in Ag held a thoroughly enjoyable walking treasure hunt around the historic village of Eyam. It was a lovely opportunity to get out and about, enjoy one another's company and learn more about the fascinating history and stories behind the village. The clues certainly kept us on our toes and gave everyone the chance to put their heads together, share ideas and test their problem-solving skills along the way. There was plenty of friendly discussion, teamwork and laughter, making it a wonderfully relaxed and memorable outing.



In August, despite a last-minute change of venue because of the weather, everyone rallied round and came together for a brilliant social evening with a fantastic turnout. The change of plan certainly didn't dampen anyone's spirits, and the evening was filled with plenty of delicious food and drink, lots of laughter and even a few games to encourage a little friendly competition and get everyone involved. It was a warm, relaxed and welcoming occasion where members could mingle, catch up with familiar faces, make new friends and, of course, put the world to rights. The lively conversation and cheerful atmosphere made it a real highlight of the summer.



September brought out everyone's creative side with a fantastic hands-on craft evening, giving members the perfect opportunity to try something new and enjoy learning alongside one another. There was a wonderful variety of activities on offer, from felting a robin and experimenting with decoupage and embroidery to having a go at woodturning on a lathe. It was great to see everyone sharing ideas, picking up new skills and admiring one another's creations as the evening unfolded. Those who tried woodturning created their own little mushroom to take home as a keepsake—a lovely reminder of a fun, inspiring and very memorable evening filled with creativity, conversation

DISCOVER DIGITAL

Help using a computer



Free Workshop

Get Connected with Confidence with the Farming Life Centre

Digital Support for Rural Derbyshire

What's It All About?

Helping people in rural communities gain skills, access, and confidence to use digital technologies—no matter your age, income, or experience.

Learn to use:

- Weather monitoring apps
- Livestock management systems
- Online marketplaces for produce, livestock or services
- Government portals for subsidies & compliance
- Time-Saving Digital Practices - tools that reduce admin time, automated record-keeping or voice-to-text apps.

Find out more about:

- Digital Financial Management: Apps for budgeting, subsidy tracking, and digital banking.
- Environmental & Carbon Accounting: digital tools for soil management and carbon tracking. to support sustainability.
- Farm Management Software

1:1 Home Visits by arrangement

Tailored support for those with limited transport

Where? Tideswell Village Hall

When? Wednesdays

10am till 12 noon

28th October until

23rd December 2026

Get in Touch

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Rural Action
DERBYSHIRE



Supported by



Government announces further support for farmers facing drought

Following months of below-average rainfall, the government has announced further measures to help farmers manage water supplies and prepare for continued dry conditions.

Since 1 October, existing abstraction licence holders have been permitted to begin refilling water storage reservoirs earlier than usual, subject to environmental restrictions. The government has also highlighted funding to support on-farm reservoir construction and changes intended to make longer-term abstraction licences easier to obtain.

While conditions vary across the country, the prolonged dry weather is a reminder of the importance of building resilience into farm businesses and planning for increasingly unpredictable weather.

Farmers can find the latest information and guidance through the [Environment Agency](#) and [Defra](#).



If you are a resident of Derbyshire this is an opportunity to make sure your voice is heard.

Listening to You 2026/27

The Listening to You survey, which runs throughout the year, helps to inform the Police and Crime Commissioner's Police and Crime Plan and ensures that resources continue to be channelled to the areas that matter most to the public and delivers the best impact on safety.

[Complete the Listening to You Survey here](#)

GRIP: the conversations farm families keep putting off

GRIP is a one-day practical workshop run by Amy Hughes of EmpowerAg, who grew up on a beef and sheep farm in North Yorkshire and is a qualified mediator. In a small group of no more than 20, you'll look at why people dig their heels in, how to have difficult conversations without them blowing up, and how to get everyone pulling the same way. You'll leave with a workbook and your first steps written down, plus an optional follow-up session.

Dates (both 9.30am to 4.30pm):

- Cheshire: Thursday 12 November, The Vicarage, Cranage, near Holmes Chapel
- Northamptonshire: Wednesday 11 November, Long Buckby Rugby Club

Places are subsidised by AHDB Beef & Lamb, with priority for English beef and sheep farmers (a CPH number is needed to book). Bring a friend or a neighbour along, it's always easier with someone you know in the room. Book at www.tickettailor.com/events/empowerag

EMPOWERAG · NOVEMBER 2026

GRIP

Workshop

The hardest part of farming isn't the work.

A practical day on the conversations farm families keep putting off: who does what, money, change and who takes over.

THU 12 NOV

Cheshire

The Vicarage, Cranage

WED 11 NOV

Northamptonshire

Long Buckby Rugby Club

9.30am – 4.30pm · Small groups, max 20 · Workbook & follow-up

Next Walk



Organised by our walk leaders, Pauline, Kay and John.



Thursday 1:15pm for 1:30pm start

Hulme End

Park and meet in the car park near the visitor centre and The Tea Junction cafe, Hulme End SK17 0EZ .

We will walk along the beautiful Manifold trail , viewing the glorious Autumn colours. Followed by drinks and cake in the cafe

Nov
5



Thursday 1:15pm for 1:30pm start

Bakewell

Our traditional pre Christmas get together. Meet at the Bakewell Agriculture centre for a walk down the lanes behind the centre.

We will have our Christmas refreshments at the River and Roast upstairs cafe

Dec
17

FCN | THE FARMING
COMMUNITY
NETWORK

In partnership with

MACMILLAN
CANCER SUPPORT

**FREE PSA tests for men
aged 40 and over at
Bakewell Market
on 23rd November 2026**

We would like to invite you to attend a
FREE PSA test, carried out with
a simple blood sample.

Booking is essential, scan the QR code
below to secure your test. **Use Code FCN26**



For more information about risks, signs and
symptoms of cancer and support available, visit:
fcn.org.uk/cancersupport