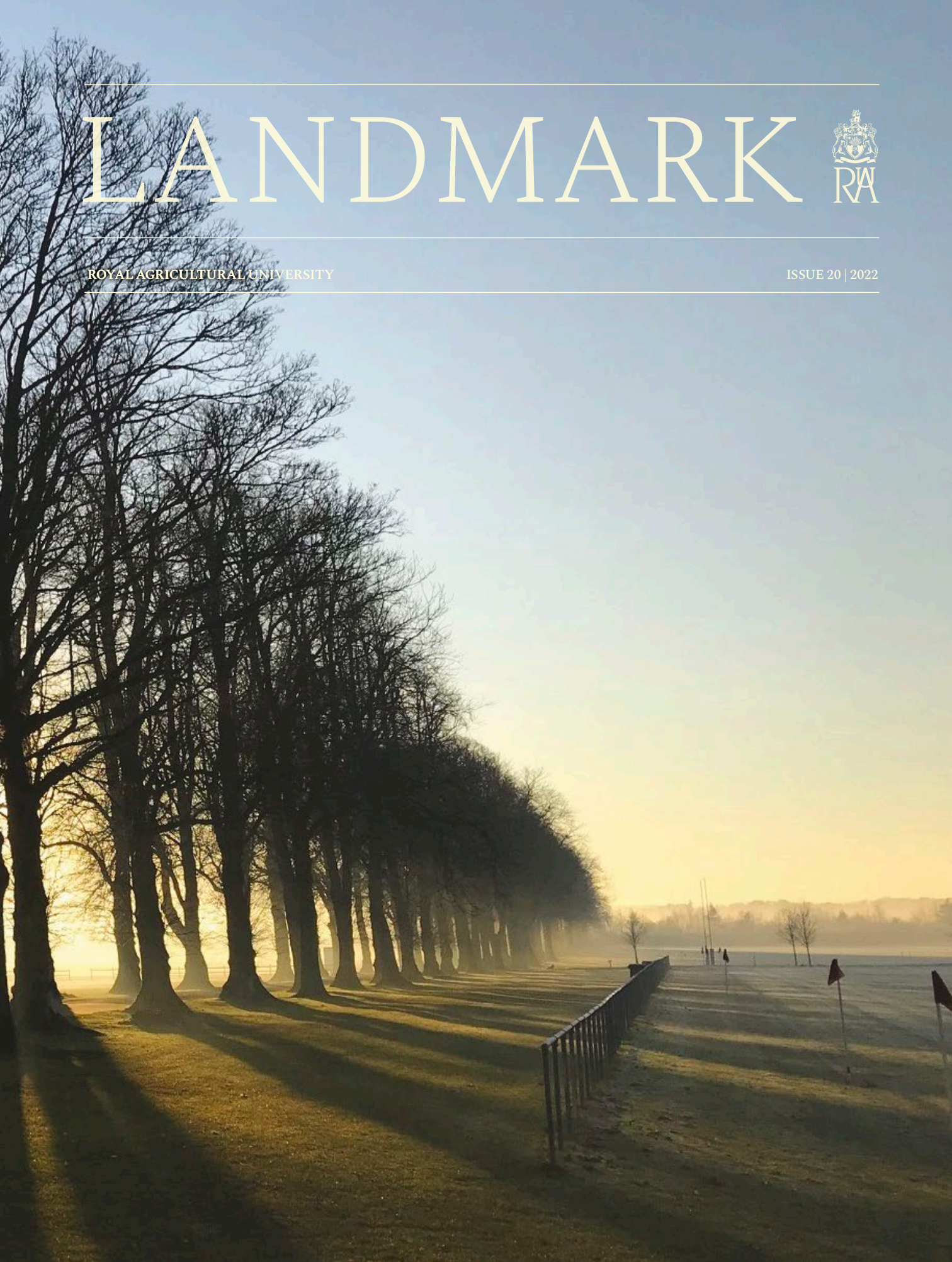

LANDMARK



ROYAL AGRICULTURAL UNIVERSITY

ISSUE 20 | 2022



CONTENTS

RAU NEWS

- 5 **Peter McCaffery takes the reins**
Welcoming our new Vice-Chancellor.
- 7 **New Chair of Governors**
Dame Fiona Reynolds DBE.
- 9 **Meet the new Governors**
Six new independent Governors.
- 11 **New Executive team**
The new team guiding the RAU.
- 13 **RAU's role in the AUC**
Launching the AUC - new joint agricultural research group announced.
- 15 **Student experience**
Transforming the student experience post-COVID.
- 17 **Wild Campus update**
In only its second year, successes are already obvious.

INDUSTRY & LEADERSHIP

- 21 **Solving America's oldest mystery**
Professor Mark Horton and RAU students on an international dig.
- 24 **You are what you eat**
Research by Professor David Main.
- 25 **Using The National Food Strategy**
Research by Professor Tom MacMillan.
- 27 **The seaweed farmers of Zanzibar**
Research by Professor Mark Horton.
- 29 **RAU & Armed Forces**
Introducing the Rural Business Transition Course.
- 30 **Opportunities**
Calling all alumni - we are looking for opportunities for our students.
- 31 **Making Headlines**
The RAU in the news.

ENTERPRISE

- 35 **Grand Ideas 2021 & 22**
Two years of Grand Ideas.
- 37 **Cotswold Hills**
Cans, fizz, and e-commerce.
- 39 **Farm491 Update**
Strengthening support for new agritech and innovation.



LANDMARK

COMMUNITY & PARTNERSHIPS

43 Women's History Month

Inspirational speakers create an engaging programme.

45 Congratulations Class of 2021

A snapshot of the 2021 graduation ceremony and its attendees.

49 New Honorary Fellows

The RAU recognises three leaders in their fields.

50 Honouring our 'Tiger'

Officially an Honorary Fellow.

51 Lifetime Achievement

Recognising Simon Pott's contributions.

52 RAU Connect

Our exclusive RAU networking website.

53 Your Weddings

Sharing the celebrations during unprecedented circumstances.

Published by
the Royal Agricultural University,
Cirencester, Gloucestershire, GL7 6JS
United Kingdom
Tel: +44 (0) 01285 652531
www.rau.ac.uk

Connect with us



RAU NEWS





Professor Peter McCaffery takes the reins at the RAU

Professor Peter McCaffery has been appointed as Vice-Chancellor and will be leading the RAU until August 2024.



Professor Peter M^cCaffery has been appointed as Vice-Chancellor and will be leading the RAU until August 2024.

Professor M^cCaffery, who joined the RAU as Deputy Vice-Chancellor in January 2021, has worked in the higher education sector for more than 35 years and has leadership, management, teaching, and research experience across a range of institutions from further education colleges to USA Ivy League universities.

An American historian by background, Peter was a regular analyst for Sky News during the years of the Trump presidency.

The son of a coal miner, Peter was born in Durham, studied History at Ulster University, and was awarded a PhD by the London School of Economics.

Peter was an Idlewild Fellow at the University of Pennsylvania where he pioneered new modes of inquiry into American urban political corruption with particular reference to Philadelphia. He has previously served as Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive at the University of Cumbria, and as Deputy Vice-Chancellor at London Metropolitan University.

He said: “It is a great privilege to be asked to lead this historic institution. As the very first agricultural college in the English-speaking world, the RAU has been developing leaders, innovators, and entrepreneurs since 1845. Our mission today bears testament to the foresight of our founders.

“The RAU’s *raison d’être* is the survival of humankind – there is no higher calling than that. We are proud of our heritage and we aim to be as societally relevant in the future as we have been in the past.”

Peter was appointed as a Winston Churchill Fellow in 1997. He was awarded a National Leadership Fellowship by the Leadership Foundation for HE and pioneered a Wider Management Mentoring Programme at London South Bank University for the university’s BME managers, in partnership with the public and private sector. He led the equality and diversity team whose work was showcased by the Higher Education Funding Council (HEFCE) in their Sustaining Excellence in HE Review.

In his spare time, Peter is an international masters’ swimmer! He lives in Surrey and is married to Carol with whom he has two grown up sons.

OUR NEW CHAIR OF GOVERNORS

Dame Fiona Reynolds DBE

Dame Fiona Reynolds DBE, former Director-General of the National Trust and, most recently, Master of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, has been appointed as the Chair of the Governing Council of the RAU.

Having served as Vice-Chair of the Governing Council since March 2021, Fiona took over from the previous Chair Professor Jonathan Kydd, whose term as a Governor concluded after eight years, in January 2022.

Fiona, whose family home is close to the RAU's Cirencester campus, was Master of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, from 2012 to 2021, having previously served as Director-General of the National Trust from 2001 to 2012.

Before joining the Trust, she was Director of the Women's Unit in the Cabinet Office (1998 to 2000), Director of the Council for the Protection of Rural England (now Campaign to Protect Rural England) (1987 to 1998), and Secretary to the Council for National Parks (now

Campaign to Protect National Parks) (1980 to 1987). She has an MA and MPhil in Geography and Land Economy from Cambridge University.

Fiona also holds a number of non-Executive roles. She is Chair of the National Audit Office, the International National Trusts Organisation, the Cathedrals Fabric Commission for England, Cambridge University's Botanic Garden, and Cambridge's Bennett Institute for Public Policy.

She is also a Trustee of the Grosvenor Estate and the charities Green Alliance and the Food, Farming and Countryside Commission; and a non-Executive Director of Wessex Water. Her book *The Fight for Beauty* was published in 2016.

Fiona was appointed CBE for services to the environment and conservation in 1998 and DBE in 2008.

Her husband Bob is a trained teacher and works for the local charity Mindsong in Gloucestershire.





“I’m both delighted and honoured to be taking this role. The RAU has a long and honourable history of innovation and leadership in rural land management and we pledge to continue that tradition.”

New Governors *appointed*



Six new independent Governors, including one of Britain's only black farmers, a columnist for the Financial Times, and the head of the Food, Farming and Countryside Commission (FFCC), have been appointed to the Governing Council of the RAU.

The new members – property and business consultant and alumnus Hugh Baker, “The Black Farmer” Wilfred Emmanuel-Jones MBE, FT columnist and woodland owner Joy Lo Dico, UK Health Security Agency director Jason Makepeace, independent agricultural consultant David Morgan, and FFCC Chief Executive and organic farmer Sue Pritchard - were welcomed to the University's first Governing Council meeting of the year by Dame Fiona Reynolds, who took over as Chair of the Governing Council in January.



Dame Fiona said: “This is a stellar team and, together with the existing governors, we have a vital job to do. I’m delighted to welcome them all to be part of the RAU.”

At the meeting, Dame Fiona also announced that Kim Frost, who has been an independent member of the Governing Council since March 2021, has now been appointed as Deputy Chair. The new Governors join other existing Council members Bob Branson, Dr Catherine MacKenzie, Neil Scott, and alumna Susan Steer, as well as RAU Vice-Chancellor Peter M’Caffery, staff Governor Phil Hudson, and a student Governor.

Kim Frost said: “I am proud and honoured to be appointed Deputy Chair and I look forward to working with Dame Fiona and my fellow Governors, new and existing, to help the University on its journey to even greater success in the future.”



Introducing the new Executive Team

We are pleased to introduce the new executive team at the RAU.

Pro Vice-Chancellor, Dr Lorraine Thomas

As Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education and Students), Lorraine's role is to provide academic leadership and guidance for the quality assurance and enhancement of the University's academic provision, the strategically aligned development of academic staff, and for the continual improvement of the RAU student learning experience. She has worked in the education sector for more than 30 years and has leadership, management, teaching and research experience.



Chief Operating Officer, Graham Pollard

Graham joined the RAU from the University of Liverpool where he spent six years as Director of Operations for the university's Faculty of Health & Life Sciences. During his time at Liverpool, Graham also served as Partnership Governor for Cheshire Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust. Graham is responsible for the running of all the professional services at the RAU, ensuring that the day-to-day business of the University is conducted efficiently, sustainably and correctly.



***Director of Research,
Professor Mark Horton***

Mark is an archaeologist with global interests and a passion to understand, and to communicate, how the modern world was formed through historical process. He specialises in landscape approaches to archaeology and has been an early adopter of UAV/drone technology, and potential new imaging methods, in the UK and overseas. He is also a passionate advocate for the public understanding of the past – through TV, radio and media – including appearances on Time Team and Coast among others.



***University Treasurer,
Simon Costa***

As Treasurer, Simon is responsible for balance sheet matters such as financing alternatives, pension schemes, and property development, and, alongside the Finance Director, for cash management. He has substantial experience in investment banking with a Wall Street and City of London career, before running his own real estate business in Virginia.

***Finance Director,
Colin Carville***

As Finance Director, Colin is responsible for the financial health of the RAU. He is an accomplished finance professional with more than 25 years’ experience, having held a number of senior finance positions within practice, industry, and Higher Education.





Agricultural universities team up on research plans

More than a dozen universities, which offer courses in agriculture and carry out agricultural research, have come together to agree on joint agricultural research priorities, working with farmers and others who have a stake in the industry's future.

With farming in the UK currently going through a rapid transition, the initiative responds to calls for more joined-up research and to ensure public investment in agricultural innovation makes a difference on the ground.

Sixteen universities recently came together to form the Agricultural Universities Council (AUC) which will engage with all four Governments in the UK in its ongoing work. This new research initiative was announced on 27 January by Defra Secretary of State, The Rt Hon George Eustice MP, the launch of the UK Agriculture Partnership which took place at the RAU, which is one of the members of the AUC. The members of the AUC are Aberystwyth University, Cranfield University, Harper Adams University, Hartpury University, Newcastle University,

Queens University Belfast, Royal Agricultural University, SRUC, University of Edinburgh, University of Hertfordshire, University of Leeds, University of Lincoln, University of Nottingham, University of Reading, University of Warwick, and Writtle University College.

The AUC will develop joint strategies to maximise the public benefit of the universities' teaching and research, work together to ensure a pipeline of high-quality graduates, and speak with one voice on issues that affect their work and impact. It is developing a joint research strategy, mapping current research capacity and activities, and engaging a wide diversity of stakeholders to understand their needs and priorities.



Agricultural Universities Council UK

This strategy will focus on the role of universities, recognising that they are one just one of many types of research provider.

The AUC will create a report addressing the highest priority areas for research investment relating to agriculture, identifying where the UK most needs to strengthen agricultural research capability, and recommending how universities can work more efficiently and effectively as a sector and with other research, funding, and stakeholder institutions.

The AUC's work to agree joint research priorities is being supported by the Centre for Effective Innovation in Agriculture (CEIA).

Professor Tom MacMillan, from the Centre and who is also the Elizabeth Creak Chair in Rural Policy and Strategy at the Royal Agricultural University, said: "Farmers, industry, and public interest groups have longstanding concerns about the impact of publicly-funded research. Some of this

frustration is shared by scientists, particularly when they find themselves competing for research grants when it would make more sense to collaborate. At this hugely challenging time for farming, it is really refreshing that so many leading research institutions are teaming up to help address this."

The CEIA launched in April 2021. It is a partnership of agricultural universities – the University of Reading, University of Warwick, Newcastle University, Harper Adams University, and the RAU – founded with five years' funding from the Elizabeth Creak Charitable Trust.

The AUC project is supported by:



CEIA
CENTRE FOR EFFECTIVE
INNOVATION IN AGRICULTURE



**ELIZABETH
CREAK**
CHARITABLE TRUST

The RAU student experience

This year we have launched several important initiatives to significantly enhance facilities for students and held lots of great events as part of our community of students and staff. Thanks to RAU staff and the RAU Students' Union (SU) for all their hard work and commitment to enhancing the student experience and enhancing our community of students and staff.



In the autumn we launched a range of initiatives for academics to enhance the student learning experience. Initiatives include a Programme Leaders' Forum, Peer Learning through Observation, and a Learning, Teaching and Assessment Matters Discussion Group.

The RAU was proud to host Gloucestershire Police and various partner agencies on campus to launch Flare, a Safer Gloucestershire app, created for women and girls to anonymously share their experiences of how and where they have felt unsafe. The app helps local agencies understand these issues and to take action. It's anonymous, quick, free to use and connects to support and advice in Gloucestershire. Thanks to Gloucestershire Police, partner agencies and colleagues for working together to organise this important event.

Our Remembrance Day Service was led by the Salvation Army and Chaplaincy team to remember the service and sacrifice of all those who have defended our freedoms and protected our way of life, including RAU alumni, students, staff and Governors. It was wonderful to see our community of students and staff come together to commemorate Remembrance Day.

A new module has been established to help students to develop their personal and professional skills, including resilience. As such, Peter Morris, Module Leader, approached international 3-day event rider Jonty Evans, who suffered a serious brain injury from a fall at an event in 2018, to speak with students. Jonty spent time in a specialist neurological rehabilitation unit and returned to competitions in 2019. Thanks to Jonty for an inspirational talk and thanks to Peter for bringing real life examples to the student experience.



In March, we celebrated International Women's Day and Women's History Month with a series of talks for the RAU community.

The series was launched by Dame Fiona Reynolds, our new Chair of Council. Speakers came from across the RAU's community and included alumnae Sophie Dalrymple, Lizzie Boher, Ketaki Raut, Kate Drury, and Sue Steer, as well as Chief Executive of the Ernest Cook Trust Dr Victoria Edwards OBE, Mayor of Cirencester Claire Bloomer, Lady Bathurst, and National Farmers Union Regional Director Mel Squires.

On International Women's Day itself, we were joined by Lisa Hogan and Miranda Tate. Miranda is an RAU alumna, graduating in 2019 with a First in International Business Management, and she and Lisa Hogan are the force behind the Diddly Squat Farm shop, well-known to many from the Amazon Prime series Clarkson's Farm.

The month was rounded out by alumna and Honorary Fellow Suzanna Hext, British swimmer and equestrian, who won three Gold medals in Dressage at the 2017 FEI European Championships and two medals at the 2019 World Para Swimming Championships. Suzanna spoke about her new sporting career in swimming, her Paralympic experience in 2021, and how she tackles and addresses the challenges of everyday life and her sporting ambitions. We wish Suzanna all the best for her future competitions.



RAG week is always jovial and full of colour and high jinks.



Getting-to-know-you and team-building exercises in Freshers' Week.



Wild Campus

Creating a wildlife haven in Cirencester



The Wild Campus project is now in its second year and is starting to make the transformational changes required across the three educational campuses in Cirencester; Royal Agricultural University, Deer Park School and Cirencester College.

The Wild Campus team, which includes students, lecturers and employees at all three sites, has been working to develop and enhance habitats for wildlife populations including rare bat species, birds, butterflies, bees, dragonflies, amphibians and reptiles. Over the last few months they have been installing bat and bird boxes around campus as well as having support from first year RAU students to create hibernaculas in an area where some great crested newts have been spotted, sowing some wildflower seeds, and creating hedgehog shelters.

The project is part funded by European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and is due to complete in May 2023 but there is still a lot to do. Over the next 12 months the team will be planting an orchard which will help with foraging for wildlife as well as supporting the objective of enhancing community wellbeing. The ponds around campus are an integral part of the project to ensure they enable the wildlife who use them to both live and thrive. To support the Wild Campus team has been working with the Newt Conservation Partnership to identify areas of improvement. A new pond will be delivered in partnership with them later this year. When you are out on campus you will hopefully spot the wildflowers that have planted as well as the daffodils and lavenders all creating an area for wildlife to flourish.

The project is part funded by the European Development Fund



In association with:



Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust and the RAU

Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust has for a long time worked with farmers in a variety of ways to support wildlife in the county. It is now expanding these relationships to work together in a concentrated effort to halt and reverse wildlife decline.

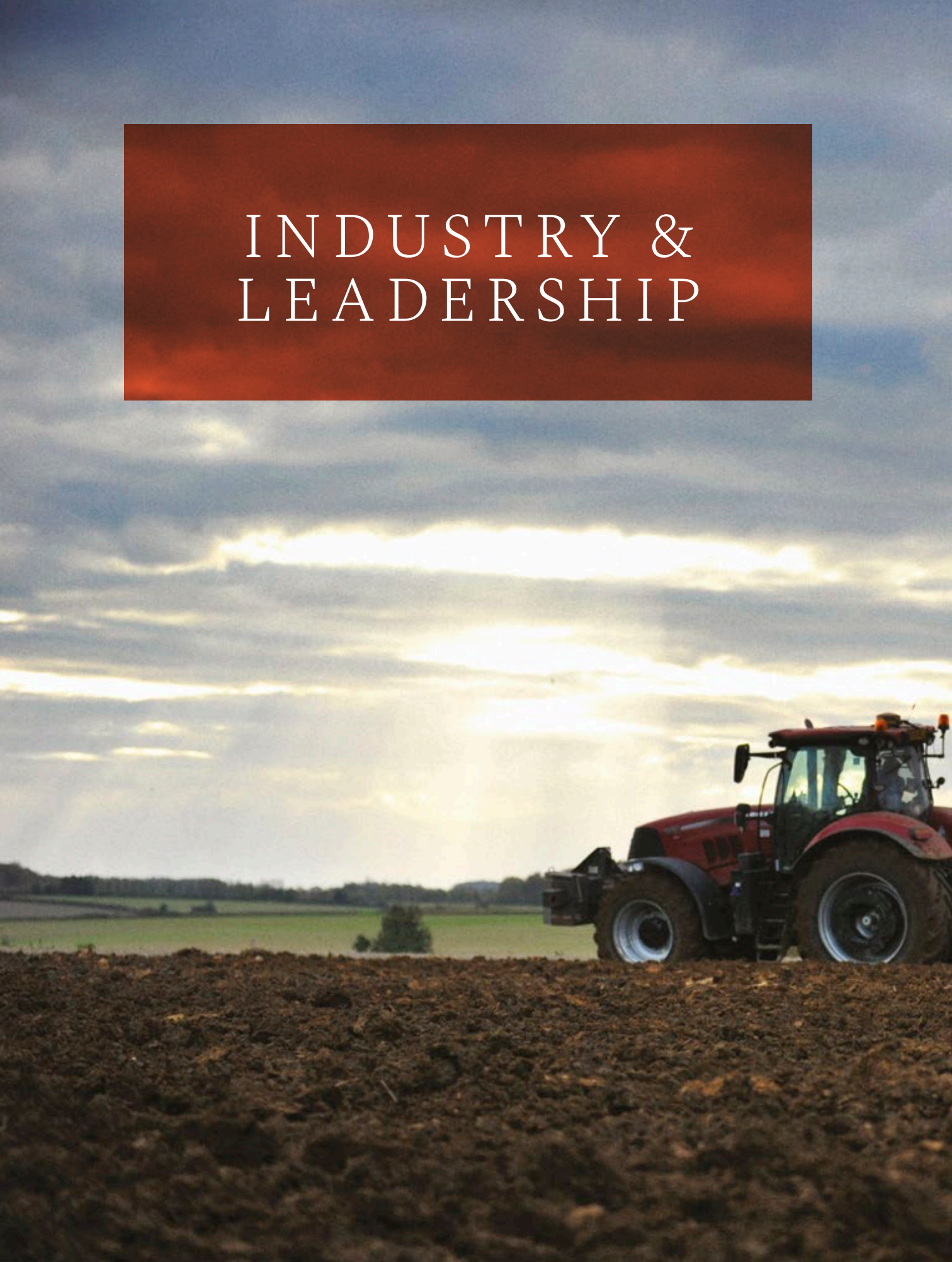
Pressures on the countryside from climate change, and the varied and many demands on land use, has led to an emergency and working together with farms will be key in making space for wildlife throughout Gloucestershire.

There is a need for the wider landscape of the UK to be multi-purpose - to support the growth of healthy and nutritious food while at the same time caring for wildlife and helping to mitigate climate change.

Agriculture is entering a period of transition as payments for public goods are being rolled out and direct payments are being reduced. By understanding business change through this period and working together, GWT aims to find farmer-led solutions to working in harmony with the natural world.

The RAU is proud to be working alongside Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust to advance this project and support wildlife health and diversity and sustainable land use across our county.

INDUSTRY & LEADERSHIP







Solving America's oldest mystery

Professor Mark Horton

In 1587, a colony of 117 English settlers were abandoned on the east coast of America. Professor Mark Horton set out with a team of RAU students to solve the mystery of their fate, and Professor Horton's expedition is now featured in a major documentary on the Discovery Science Channel.

The story begins in 1584 when Sir Walter Raleigh (now known as Sir Walter Raleigh) was granted a patent by Queen Elizabeth I to colonise America – the first stirring of English expansion overseas that ultimately led to the British Empire. By 1590, the colonists had disappeared and America's oldest mystery began. The debate around the fate of the 'Lost Colony' has raged for the next 400 years and, around this, the origins of English America. A team from the Cultural Heritage Institute of the RAU spent December 2021 investigating the mystery and, maybe, finding the answer.

In 1584 two ships landed on the Outer Banks of North Carolina and met with a friendly Algonquian tribe. The ships returned with two Indians, Manteo and Wanchese, and glowing

reports of the friendly natives and fertile lands. A much larger military expedition was promptly dispatched under Sir Richard Grenville, with scientists, metallurgists and a talented artist, John White. The English remained for 12 months but had to be rescued after they had antagonised the locals and run out of food. Undaunted, Raleigh raised the money for a permanent plantation, to be called the 'Cittie of Raleigh', and three ships with 116 planters set out in 1587 led by the artist John White as their governor.

Their destination was the island of Roanoke where the earlier expedition had already built a fort. Advised by Manteo, who remained loyal to the English (and probably spoke English), they set about building a palisaded



settlement on the island. White's own daughter Eleanor gave birth to a daughter, christened Virginia, who was the very first English person born in the New World. For reasons not entirely clear, John White decided to return back to England, perhaps to secure more supplies. However with the threatened Spanish Armada, 1587-1588 was not a good time to return and he only eventually reached the Outer Banks in 1590. As he stepped ashore on Roanoke island all trace of the colonists had gone.

He found the abandoned settlement empty while his own chests, buried for safe keeping, were all dug up. There was a clue, carved on an oak tree, three letters CRO which indicated where they had to fled to the island of Croatoan, the home of the loyal Manteo, where Cape Hatteras juts into the Atlantic and where they might hope to be rescued. Tragically, due to bad weather, White never reached Croatoan, and returned to England empty-handed.

Croatoan is now known as Hatteras island – a holiday island full of expensive houses and National Park – so any hope of finding the remains of the colonists was always slim. If the English had survived, then we judged that they would have been taken in by the local Algonquian tribe and most likely assimilated into the tribe. But how could we find evidence of this?

.....

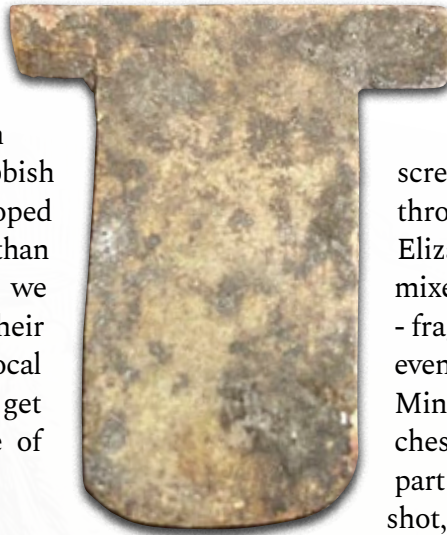
Fortunately, there are several Indian sites on the island, dating to the 16th and 17th centuries and these often contain large areas of abandoned rubbish known as middens. We hoped that if we could find Elizabethan artefacts there, then perhaps we had a ‘smoking gun’ for their survival. Working with the local community, we were able to get permission to investigate one of these sites.

Such is the interest in story of the ‘lost colony’ in America that our work was followed by a TV crew from the Discovery Channel, following every discovery hour by hour. For our students from the Cultural Heritage Institute, it was an amazing experience to be part of this research and to be stars of the screen!



Lizzie and Lucy recording stratigraphy.

We are able to excavate one area of midden, around 4x4m, to a depth of over one metre. Covered in a huge sand-dune from an earlier hurricane (Cape Hatteras is known as hurricane



alley), we were able find two levels of midden – one dating to the late 16th century and one to the 17th century. As we screened every bucketful of deposit through millimetre mesh, the Elizabethan finds started to appear mixed in with native American finds - fragments of fine glass vessels, and even glass window quarries, beads, Ming china shards, fragments of iron chests, and, perhaps most tellingly, part of a cannon ball known as saker shot, typical of the mid 16th century.

My favourite find was however part of a copper necklace (pictured left) of the type worn by the Indian chiefs – maybe it could have been Manteo's own?

But the smoking gun? I’m not sure if a single artefact will ever prove anything but we did find a small brass rose of a typical early Tudor type maybe dating to around 1500-1550. An heirloom maybe, already old, and carried across the oceans to find its way eventually into a Native American rubbish heap!



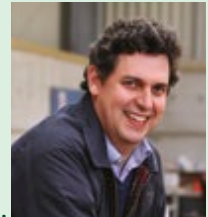
Brass Tudor rose found during the excavations.

The Lost Colony of Roanoke: New Evidence. Aired on The Science Channel (USA and Canada) Sunday 8th May.



You are what you eat: Taking food education seriously

Professor David Main



Young advocates like Greta Thunberg have reminded us that young people listen to young people and that “Change is coming, whether you like it or not”.

It is therefore appropriate that a University which is at the centre of food and farming policy, research, and education is enabling undergraduates to inspire the next generation to understand their role on the future food system.

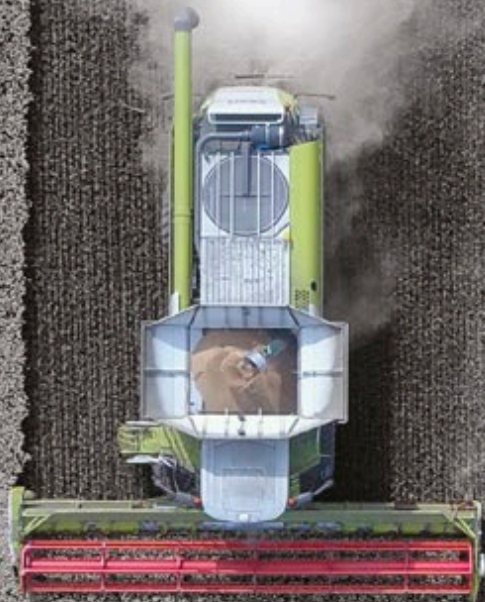
As part of the new BSc Environment, Food and Society (EFS) degree, under the guidance of Professor David Main, RAU undergraduate students are spreading the message about food and farming directly to local school children, giving an insight to the next generation about food provenance.

The recent National Food Strategy set out the need for our future food system to “make us well instead of sick, be resilient enough to withstand global shocks, help us restore nature and halt climate change, and meet the

standards the public expect”. As the report highlights, this requires a long-term shift in our food culture with a call for the education sector to “take food education seriously”. This includes helping young people understand where food comes from, how it is produced and how this affects the natural environment.

Students enrolled on the EFS programme are well aware of the societal pressures on the food and farming sector. It is a unique undergraduate programme, developed with Government investment, aiming to inspire young people in four key themes ; People and Food, Food and the Environment, People and the Environment, and Making a Difference. In addition, students this year are developing a teaching activity that will enable 60 children from a Cirencester primary school to experience and learn about issues such as food waste and effect of climate change on food production. The 2nd year also includes a work placement where students can observe and reflect upon the role of education in engaging the wider community in food and farming.

Using The National Food Strategy



Prof Tom MacMillan, Elizabeth Creak
Chair in Rural Policy and Strategy

After more than two years in the making, the National Food Strategy was published in July 2021. It was the product of a huge effort in gathering evidence, consultation and sense-making. I know first-hand as I was an independent advisor in the team that helped Henry Dimbleby to develop the strategy.

But does it actually help? We already know we face big problems in our food system. Did we really need another report to point that out?

There are plenty of reasons why I think the food strategy is useful. Here are my top five.

First, it brings global issues home. When we hear about problems like climate change, biodiversity loss or food insecurity, it is tempting to think things are different here in the UK. Well, they are but they aren't. The food strategy sets out the picture in the UK and shows that it warrants urgent action.

Second, it tells a blameless story. Many of these problems are the side-effects of rising to the post-war challenge of feeding the world. Recognising that we're in this together – not casting food businesses or farmers as the baddies – makes the politics of doing something about it more plausible.

Third, the report makes an overwhelming case that this includes state intervention on junk food to protect the nation's health. But don't take my word for it.

The Daily Mail said: "this problem is so damaging we need a sea change. As with tobacco and alcohol before, the case for state intervention is overwhelming... Ministers should act on this report."

Fourth, it steers a way through the debates that we tend to get stuck on in farming. Land

sparing or land sharing? Both. Carbon, nature or food production? All three. On meat – the most sensitive concern – it shows how, counterintuitively, eating less meat gives us more environmental headroom for ruminant agriculture and for the kind of grazed landscape Britons love. Unless we eat a bit less, reducing processed meat on a scale we might barely notice as consumers, we'll force a further shift to intensive poultry and feed production.

Finally, the report sets out realistic recommendations. Not a wishlist of everything that should happen but the first steps for this government. They include giving farmers more of the clarity they are owed, on the new Environmental Land Management schemes, on government's vision for land use (which is implied in policies but unspoken), and crucially on the standards that will be protected in trade deals.

So those are five reasons why I think the report is useful and I urge you to use it. There are doubtless points we get wrong across its 290 pages, but please make the most of what it gets right. This is especially important as government prepares its white paper in response.

My plea comes from experience. Back in 2008, I advised on another official review called Food Matters. It was commissioned by Gordon Brown and produced by the Cabinet Office. While those were very different times, the issues were already clear and the evidence and conclusions much the same. Yet it had little impact, so here we are, not so long later, with another 'once in a lifetime' review.

The problems we face around food won't go away until we do something about them. Indeed, they will only get tougher. The National Food Strategy gives the chance to make an urgent and overdue start.

.....

The seaweed farmers of Zanzibar

Professor Mark Horton

Our Director of Research and Innovation Mark Horton explains why we may soon have our own seaweed farm on Zanzibar.



Zanzibar, and its twin island of Pemba (Tanzania), are perhaps best known for spices, beaches, or being the birthplace of Freddie Mercury. However, one of the most important industries is not tourism but the cultivation of seaweed, employing around 20,000 workers, mostly women. Today, the Royal Agricultural University is closely involved with the government in securing new investment to improve the income of the farmers themselves.

The two tropical islands are low lying, and surrounded by shallow sandy lagoons, protected from the Indian Ocean waves by fringing reefs. These warm lagoons are ideal for growing seaweed. In 1989, two non-native species were introduced from the Philippines: *Eucheuma alvarezii* (cottonii) and *E. denticulatum* (spinosum), mostly for the carrageenan that can be extracted – a useful foodstuff in everything from toothpaste to diet sodas. It even has its own E-number - E407.

The seaweed is grown on ropes strung between sticks - each plant is laboriously tied to the nylon rope and left in the shallows for at least two months. Harvest involves removing the plant and carrying it ashore in flimsy plastic boats to dry. Once dry, it is cleaned by hand, bundled up in sacks and sold to local merchants by weight.

The workers earn little for their labours, maybe \$50 for 10-20 days of back-breaking work. Plus, the world price of carrageenan fell significantly during COVID and production of the more valuable cottonii variety collapsed due to disease and increased sea temperatures. With the development of more hotels along the beaches, the future of the seaweed farmers is not bright.

Our project in northern Pemba documented the industry from the farmers' perspective and we discovered they were highly motivated with an intimate knowledge of maritime landscape and seasonal ecology. With such a skilled resource, it seemed obvious that other indigenous species could also be harvested.



There is now huge interest in seaweed as a ‘magic bullet’ to solve some of the world’s climate and ecological challenges. Seaweed is now successfully grown as an ingredient in organic fertilisers or as additives to animal feed that can improve livestock yields and reduce methane emissions. Methane is one of the potent greenhouse gases which has to be reduced if net-zero is achieved by 2040, and seaweed may well be a solution.



Working with Blue Economy Ministry from the Zanzibar Government, the Scottish Association for Marine Science (SAMS), and one of the leading seaweed processing firms, Nutrisan, we are hoping we will soon be able to test new approaches. A delegation from Zanzibar visited the UK in May to explore possibilities and we hope to start trials in 2023.

Strange though it may seem, we may soon have our very own RAU seaweed farm in Zanzibar!



The RAU & the Armed Forces



We have a long tradition of service leavers coming to the RAU, and alumni going on to join Her Majesty's Forces, and are seeking to boost this through the promotion of rural skills, research and learning to service leavers and with support for best practice and professional excellence through our Knowledge Exchange programme for former members of HM Forces among our alumni network.

We are signatories to the Armed Forces Covenant and have been working to increase our outreach to members of the Armed Forces, service leavers and their families.

Working with recent alumna and veteran Fiona Galbraith and her company RuRALink, we are pleased to announce a bespoke two week course, the Rural Business Transition course.

This course is specifically designed for individuals in the military community

who are considering developing a follow-on career in management within agriculture, food and the wider land-based sector. Resettling personnel, veterans, reservists and military spouses are all eligible and encouraged to apply.

The community of service leavers, their families and networks have a great deal to add to the rural sector in terms of practical and leadership skills, and we hope to pave the way for a wider appreciation of the benefits for the individuals, those in HM Forces responsible for career transition, and in the wider food and rural sectors.

Thanks to the MacRobert Trust, which supports both the Armed Forces and education and advancing professional excellence, particularly in Agriculture and Sustainability, we have secured two scholarships a year for the next three years, to support accommodation costs for the course.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT
RAU.AC.UK/RURAL-BUSINESS-CAREER-TRANSITION-COURSE**

WE ARE LOOKING FOR

OPPORTUNITIES

FOR RAU STUDENTS



Could you or your company offer an industry placement to a RAU Student?

A work placement is a huge part of a student's university life, as many alumni will remember. It is a chance for them to apply their academic and theoretic skills in the industries in which they may find jobs.

The RAU is keen to produce well-rounded young professionals ready for the workplace, with courses including either holiday internships, 15 week or 12 month placements.

**Placements required for: Agri-business,
Farming, Equine, Land Management.**

If you are able to offer a taste of industry to a student or would like more information, please email alumni@rau.ac.uk

Making Headlines

FROM INTERNATIONAL DIGNATORIES TO CLEVER CANINES

FIRST “AND FINALLY...”



The RAU was delighted to be featured on ITV News at Ten’s “and finally” slot last summer when an RAU Research Fellow revealed that a network of ancient Derbyshire caves had been made into a dwelling almost 900 years earlier than was originally thought. The Anglo-Saxon dwelling and oratory, in the Grade II listed Anchor Church Caves between Foremark and Ingleby in South Derbyshire, had been believed to date from the early 18th century but research carried out by the RAU’s Dr Edmund Simons proved that the dwelling did, in fact, date from the 9th century. The story was covered worldwide, from Australia, America, and Japan, to Denmark, Poland and Greece, and, as well as being featured in many national UK newspapers and broadcast media, it made it onto the legendary “and finally” slot on ITV’s News at Ten!

MINISTERS AND COUNCILS

In March, we were pleased to be selected by DEFRA as the site from which the Secretary of State for Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs, George Eustice MP, and Ministers of State, Judith Pow MP and Victoria Prentiss MP, launched the UK Agricultural Partnership – a post-Brexit initiative aimed at bringing together a range of stakeholders, from every part of the UK, to identify and work on shared issues facing the agricultural sector, supported by insights from world-leading researchers, experts, and industry leaders.

The Secretary of State also announced the creation of the Agriculture Universities Council (AUC), a partnership of sixteen UK universities involved in teaching and research on agriculture, who, in recognising that improved collaboration is the real key to unlocking the potential of innovation in agriculture, have agreed to work together to develop a joint research strategy in support of the stark environmental challenges that we face. Our own Professor Tom MacMillan played a pivotal role in the formation of the partnership.

RAG WEEK MAKES A SPLASH



Photo by Paul Nicholls.

The much anticipated, post COVID-19, return of RAG Week was heralded by a double page spread of photographs of the departure of the RAG Rally in Cirencester’s Wilts & Glos Standard while the RAU’s new progression agreement with Cambridge-based language school Bell Cambridge was widely welcomed.

RAU SWINDON

In October 2021, representatives from the media came along to the official opening of RAU Swindon. The purpose-converted workshop, in the former GWR carriage works in the railway heritage quarter of Swindon, offers postgraduate courses in historic environment management and the conservation and management of historic buildings, as well as providing extra off-campus teaching space for many other RAU courses.

The building was transformed thanks to a £1.35m investment by Swindon Borough Council and provides modern and fully accessible facilities in an innovative learning space designed to encourage collaboration and interdisciplinary studies.

INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIP



The RAU has entered into a long-term partnership with the Uzbekistan Ministry of Agriculture to launch the International Agriculture University (IAU) in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. RAU Vice-Chancellor Professor Peter McCaffery signed the official Partnership Agreement, formalising the relationship between the two

institutions, via video link during a meeting with Mr Jamshid Khodjaev, Uzbekistan's Minister of Agriculture.

The partnership will give IAU students an equivalent educational experience to that of students at the RAU, with IAU students accessing a blend of face to face and online lectures and resources, by franchising some of the RAU's existing degree programmes, and developing new degrees and modules to suit Uzbekistan's conditions and its international trade ambitions as the new university grows and develops.

POLICE TRAINING ON CAMPUS

Gloucestershire Police's newest four-legged recruits hit the headlines when they visited the RAU as part of their training. Rescue dogs Rolo, Bonnie, Ollie, and Marshall came onto campus as part of their 6-week training course to find pre-hidden drugs, money and firearms. Photographs of the dogs working on the RAU's beautiful campus were featured in local Gloucestershire media and even made it into the Daily Star, possibly the first time the RAU has ever featured in this esteemed publication!

THE NEW CHAIR, MEDIA FRENZY.

The appointment of Dame Fiona Reynolds DBE, former Director-General of the National Trust and, most recently, Master of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, as the RAU's new Chair of Governing Council generated lots of media interest at the start of 2022. This was followed, in March, by more UK media coverage as the RAU appointed six new independent Governors.

RAU MAKING OPPORTUNITIES

Earlier this year, we were proud to launch two new undergraduate scholarships to attract and reward the brightest applicants from the UK's under-represented minority ethnic communities. The Ethnic Minority Excellence Scholarships, which are for both full and part time students, are each worth £9,000 a year for a maximum of three years.



Photo by Paul Nicholls.

ENTERPRISE





GRAND IDEAS WINNERS 2021 & 2022



Camilla Cummins
Grand Ideas runner
up 2022.



Imogen Burgoyne
Grand Ideas
winner 2022.

The last few years have been difficult for business owners and especially for entrepreneurs launching and running new enterprises.

That is why we are proud that the RAU's Grand Idea competition has kept running, and thrown up incredibly diverse ideas in what is its 15th year.

2021's winners, Lily Grime and Mia Ashfield, were inspired during lockdown to create Bijou Beads, a business selling functional and sustainable mobile phone charms.

Due to Covid restrictions, last year's event was held virtually, via Zoom, but this year the judges and contestants were delighted to be able to meet in person on campus in the Boutflour Hall.

This year's winner was Imogen Burgoyne who is setting up not one, but two, businesses – a course which prepares young people for adulthood and a private, secure, dog walking facility in Sussex.

The first is a three-day residential education course, teaching school leavers basic fundamental life skills such as cookery, finance, and household and car maintenance, which are currently not really taught much in schools.

The second is a private dog pen facility, equipped with agility equipment, training aids, benches, and undercover areas, set in three acres of beautiful grass and woodland where dog owners can take their dog off the lead without worrying. The location also offers a veterinary practice, hydrotherapy centre, and even a coffee shop!

This year's runner up was postgraduate student Camilla Cummins from Bath. Her company – The Cummins Co – produces high quality, sustainable British beef from a herd of Dexter

cattle. The winner and the runner up could not have more different business ideas, traditional to modern, but both reflect the strength and depth of ideas coming from RAU students.

“It was delightful to have the Grand Idea competition back in full flow again this year, post-Covid, and with an all-female entrepreneur line up. We will strive for more diversity next year!”

Christine Cross, Chair of the judging panel of the 2022 competition.

“The extent to which social purpose and sustainability is driving the passion of our entrepreneurs was also evident and the judges were particularly impressed with the standard of submissions, especially considering that two of the five finalists were in their first undergraduate year, so we look forward to seeing them again.

“The endeavours of the RAU in supporting enterprise is a key motivator in attracting students but also in showing just how much intelligent thinking can give back to society. Congratulations to all who took part, they were all commended by the judges.”



Christine Cross with Lily Grime and Mia Ashfield, Grand Ideas winners 2021.



New Sparkling from Cotswold Hills

The RAU's award-winning wine social enterprise project Cotswold Hills has continued to blossom over the last few years with our product range, stockists and sales growing over a turbulent trading period. This success allowed us to continue to contribute proceeds to our Enterprise Programme, supporting budding RAU entrepreneurs to start their own businesses.

Towards the end of 2021, we launched our long awaited traditional sparkling white wine (2019) to very positive feedback, including winning a medal at the Wine GB West Competition.

We produced around 350 bottles of this inaugural sparkling wine and they are selling fast; however, we do have plans to release another vintage (2020) later this year.

In 2022 we are also launching our 100% recycled, 100% recyclable plastic flat wine bottles that can be sent through the post. We are the first small producer in the UK to do this.



and Rosé

We also released a new fizzy rosé in a can, to join our best-selling fizzy white can of wine. Our cans, which were developed from a second-year business module, are now stocked in over 100 outlets including a number of Mid-counties Co-Op stores and are proving a popular addition due to their convenience and ease of recycling.

We recently had the opportunity to sell at Jeremy Clarkson and Lisa Hogan's Diddly Squat farm shop, and hope to be returning there again over the summer. Our Cotswold Hills student group has been working on some exciting new projects this year including a new e-commerce website, as well as ways to further increase our sustainability credentials including looking at our bottle packaging ready for postal orders. Last summer we also filmed at the vineyard with some very special guests which we hope to be able to tell you about in the next few months.



BRONZE AWARD FOR ORTEGA

The RAU's first single grape variant, the 2020 Cotswold Hills Ortega, scooped Bronze awards at the 2022 WineGB Awards and the Independent English Wine Awards (IEWA 22). This is a limited still white Ortega of just 1000 bottles.



To find out more, please follow us on [@CotswoldHillsWine](https://www.instagram.com/CotswoldHillsWine)

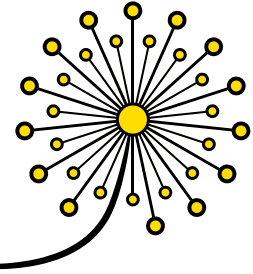
You can purchase Cotswold Hills by the case online via: www.cotswoldhills.org.uk



RAU FARM 491

AGRITECH INNOVATION & INCUBATION

Update



Our focus at Farm491 this year has been strengthening our business support offering to our members.

We hold a unique position in the AgriTech incubator marketplace and provide the best possible support to entrepreneurs in the sector.

After the challenges faced by many entrepreneurs over the past nearly two years, we set out to make our support offering a priority for the year ahead. The decision was made to bring in a team of experts to provide one-to-one business advice and mentoring to our members. The six business advisors have proved a real asset to the team and have been providing invaluable advice and contacts to the 70 exciting companies that are our members.

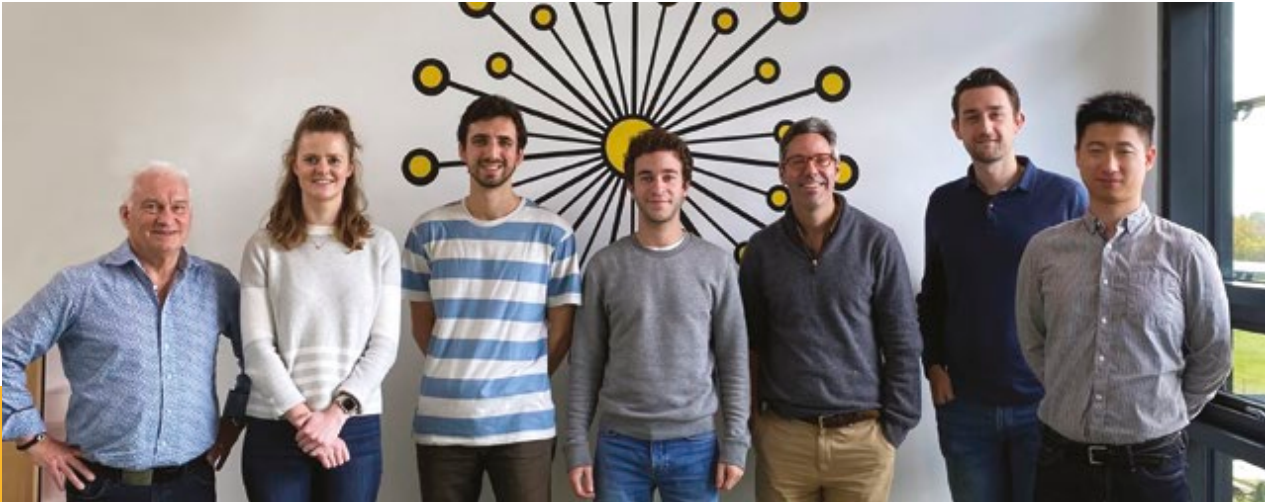
In addition to the one-to-one support, we have worked hard to develop some exciting programmes and events. Of note has been our investor-ready pitch deck programme which allowed a small cohort

of our members to gain both group and individual insights and feedback about their pitch decks, led by an AgriTech investor. We have also been delivering workshops and mentoring for EIT Food's Seedbed programme to a cohort of European start-ups which has further expanded our reach.

It's been great to get back to some face to face engagement, as well as still delivering online sessions to ensure we can reach as many entrepreneurs as possible. The launch of our webinar series exploring challenges faced within agriculture currently and what the future may look like, specifically focusing on livestock, food and arable, was welcomed by many start-ups looking to enter the market and also those who are well established. Towards the end of the year we invited our Greenhouse Programme cohort

to visit Farm491 for a half day workshop which provided some great business foundations as well as the opportunity to meet one another in person.

Student engagement has continued with perhaps our biggest intake of RAU student members so far. Our RAU alumni network has also grown and we have some brilliant long-standing members who came to us through the RAU. An example is James Bolesworth from CRM Agri. James joined as a virtual member in 2017 and, in 2018, took up an office with us. His team has grown from two to six and is gaining support through our business advisors and networking opportunities, such as attending a panel discussion with the Worshipful Company of Farmers in November 2021.



Greenhouse Programme cohort 2021.

More recently we started engaging with local schools to encourage STEM as a career opportunity. Our Discover STEM event was a hit with year 9s who enjoyed making bubble tea, learning about drones and playing with a robotic sprayer.

Soon we will be releasing an online training platform which can be accessed by businesses across the globe. We'll also be launching, and hopefully securing sponsorship for, exciting events for both members and external companies.

We are always happy to chat about any business needs or opportunities to collaborate so please do get in touch with Head of Farm491, Sarah Carr: sarah.carr@rau.ac.uk



November 2021 the Worshipful Company of Farmers panel discussion/networking session Hosted at Farm491, Alliston Building.



Year 9s enjoying an Auto Sprayer demonstration during our STEM outreach session.



COMMUNITY & PARTNERSHIPS





CELEBRATING ACHIEVEMENTS IN WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

As part of our equality, diversity and inclusion programme at the RAU, we are exploring a number of initiatives this year, one of which was a programme of speakers for Women's History Month. The speakers came from across the spectrum of the RAU community, including alumnae, friends, Governors and local connections.

We kicked off with a launch from Chair of Governors, Dame Fiona Reynolds, saw talks including one of our very first female students, Sue Steer, and local luminaries Clare Bloomer (Mayor of Cirencester) and Lady Bathurst. We were also joined by the RAU's new DEI (Diversity, Equality and

Inclusion) Consultant Lydia Heywood who spoke about diversity in the equine industry.

International Women's Day featured Miranda Tate (2019 International Business Management) and Lisa Hogan, who are the double act behind the Diddy Squat Farm Shop made famous by the Amazon series Clarkson's Farm (ably interviewed by our very own in-house Michael Parkinson, Head of Development and Alumni Relations Hannah Langford). The series closed with an inspirational talk by Paralympic swimmer and equestrian Suzanna Hext. We are very grateful to all those who took time to come and speak to our students, staff and alumni.



International Women's Day

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH



1.



2.



3.



4.



5.

1. Sue Steer 2. Lisa Hogan & Miranda Tate 3. Suzanna Hext 4. Lydia Heywood 5. Claire Bloomer

Congratulations Class of 2021





Congratulations Class of 2021





Meet the new *Honorary Fellows*

THE RT. HON. THE EARL BATHURST MRAC



Lord Bathurst received the Advanced Farm Management Diploma as Lord Apsley in 1985. After attending the RAC, he later became a Governor in 2001 when his father retired from the Council, thus extending the remarkable record of the Bathurst family, unbroken since the time that the RAC was founded in 1845. His contribution over the next 12 years was assiduous, consistent, and varied and he was noted for being prepared to volunteer for important sub-committees such as Health and Safety, then playing a role in the 'ground breaking' Environmental Sustainability Strategy Group while giving support on many aspects of life

at the RAC and always being active with students and staff. Practical farming and management experience from his large and diverse estate was frequently used to illustrate how things might develop for the RAC with opportunities that benefited College, including land for development of sports areas. After a long time on Council, extended beyond the usual HEFCE guidelines for constant service, a proposal led to a unanimous vote by Council and an invitation to become a Vice-President, a role that he has undertaken with great commitment, enthusiasm and style for several years.

SARAH TENNANT-BELL



Sarah, known affectionately to all as “STB”, has been the forefront all student activities at the RAU for nearly 15 years, an integral part of the RAU family. To quote the late Vic Hughes: “The Students are the most important people here” and Sarah embodies that statement. She has been the ‘maternal figure’ for many students throughout her time here, going above and beyond to ensure that they all get the most from their RAU experience.

Not only has Sarah looked after the welfare both mentally and

physically of students, she has also been a constant source of support and advice for the Student Union, making sure that both the students and the SU officers keep in line (a full time job in itself!). She has been crucial in the organisation of countless Balls (including her infamous DJ sets), RAG weeks, welfare campaigns, and many more elements of non-academic student life and the whole RAU student experience. STB is the first Honorary Fellow to be nominated for her award directly by the RAU student body.

XIAOYU (TIGER) WANG



Following undergraduate education at China Agricultural University and a Masters at Wageningen University, Xiaoyu (*Tiger*) Wang received his MBA from the RAU in 2011 and went on to become the founder, Chair and CEO of Sino Campus Edu., Beijing.

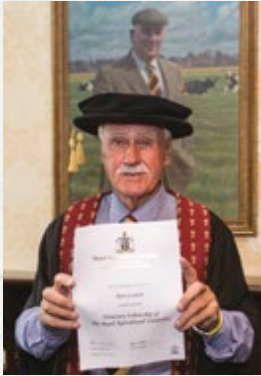
Sino Campus is now one of the leading education service providers in the field of transnational and enterprise education in China, with a strong presence in the UK. The RAU has a well-established, well-known and highly fruitful relationship with Sino Campus, primarily through the teaching partnership with Shandong Agricultural University (SDAU) and the new Joint Institute for Advanced Agri-Technology at Qingdao Agricultural University (QAU).

The former of these has now operated for well over a decade, allowing over 10,000 Chinese students to benefit from teaching by RAU staff. It was this platform that allowed RAU and Sino Campus to partner successfully with QAU to bid for the Joint Institute, and for RAU to become the first and only small specialist provider to be recognised by the China Ministry of Education. RAU and Sino Campus now work side by side at QAU to deliver the four degree programmes, with Tiger and his team known colloquially as RAU's Beijing Office. Many tens of thousands of students and educators have benefitted from Tiger's work, while the RAU has undoubtedly benefitted in many ways from Tiger's wise advice and leadership.

.....

Honorary Fellows continued

RON COATEN MRAC



Mr Ronald Coaten universally known as Ron, retired in 2019 having been involved with the Royal Agricultural College/University for a total of fifty years. During his time at Cirencester, he served under seven principals and two Vice-Chancellors, from Frank Garner to Jo Price.

Starting as the Bar Manager (despite being teetotal) in 1969, Ron quickly became known as the man to help with all student issues which led to him becoming Student Welfare Officer. He was on call 24 hours a day, becoming indispensable to a range of RAC clubs and societies and rescuing students from their more interesting “adventures”.

Stepping down from his Welfare Officer role 15 years ago, he became involved with RACA (the alumni association which later became the alumni office) on a part time basis. Ron has been a connector and influencer in the sector and his RAU radar is always on despite retiring (this time, he claims, for good) in 2019.

In recognition of his work and long association with the RAU, Ron was granted his Honorary Fellowship in 2020. Covid-19 prevented him from receiving it until 2022 where it was fittingly awarded beneath the portrait of Vic Hughes, to whom Ron was a support and friend long after their time together at Cirencester.

SIMON POTT MRAC: LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT



Mr Simon Pott MRAC is a man who needs very little introduction to the RAU community. Simon came to study at the Royal Agricultural College in 1970 and developed an aptitude for networking which stood him in good stead in his career.

After working in a number of firms, taking them from strength to strength in rural surveying, the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors sparked his imagination. Progressing quickly through the ranks of the RICS, he led the Rural Practice Division in 1988 and later, in 1995, he was elected President.

He was a stalwart member of the RAU Governing Council, serving as its Chairman between 2005 and 2011, and latterly has been in the role of Vice-President for the last ten years. He has been involved in a range of projects that have helped the RAU develop and maintain its high profile.

His service to his industry, the rural sector and in particular to the RAU was recognised with the award of a Lifetime Achievement Award at Graduation in 2021.

.....

**Advance your
career with
professional
networking:**

RAU Connect



Have you joined our new website RAU Connect yet?
RAU Connect is the one-stop shop for all things RAU.



- Update your address details
- Find old friends from Cirencester
- Order a new copy of your class photo or an RAU tie
- Register for alumni events
- Jobs board: post your own opportunities
- Add your company to our business directory
- Sign up to mentor a current student, or offer work placement opportunities

FIND US AT ALUMNI.RAU.AC.UK

Your weddings



Covid-19 continues to play havoc with many people's plans this year but we are delighted to announce the following alumni weddings which have taken place since the last edition of Landmark. If you would like your wedding to be included in a future edition, please email landmark@rau.ac.uk



*Olivia Crang and Chris Wald (both 2014)
married on 2nd October 2021 in Somerset.*



*Harriet Jessop (2009) and James Guest
married on 20th May 2021
in Rippingale, Lincolnshire.*



*Elizabeth (Lulu) Burton (2012) and
Jethro Agnew (2010) married on 25th
September 2021 in Oulton, Norfolk.*

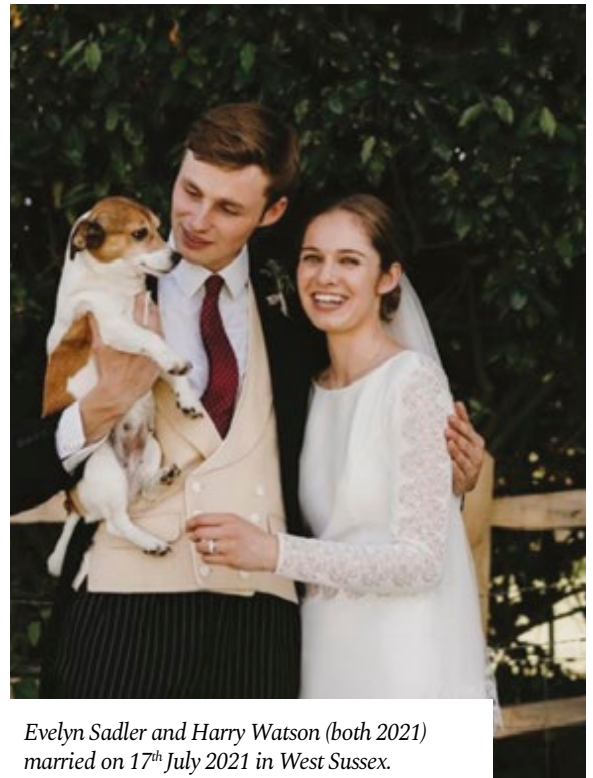


Natalie Murphy (2008) and Tim Barker (2006 and 2015) married on 11th September 2021 in Lustleigh, Devon.



Katrina Collett (2015) and George Tiley (2018) married on 4th September 2021 in Snowhill, Gloucestershire.

Emma Binnian and Christopher Stevenson (both 2014) married on the 26th June 2021 in Yorkshire.



Evelyn Sadler and Harry Watson (both 2021) married on 17th July 2021 in West Sussex.

