

Northamptonshire Young Farmers' Clubs

Press Release

Dated 10th December 2019

Young Farmers support the local environment in tree planting campaign

Young Farmers from two Northamptonshire Clubs have shown their support for the environment and mental wellbeing by planting trees at Brigstock and Pytchley over the past two weekends.

Nine members of Oundle Young Farmers' Club plus one from Thrapston YFC, aged between 12 and 23, planted over 100 trees at Park Farm, Brigstock on 1st December, while on 8th December four members of Thrapston Young Farmers planted 15 trees in Pytchley.

The support of Brigstock landowner Mrs Jacque Millbank and Pytchley Parish Council was vital to the success of the tree planting campaign in the county which linked into Northamptonshire Young Farmers' #ReachingOut project which, with the support of the Farming Community Network (FCN) and Scotts of Thrapston, aims to promote positive mental health among young people in rural and farming communities in the county.

The planting project was also part of a national initiative called #ProtectYourFuture, launched by the National Federation of Young Farmers' Clubs (NFYFC) in February 2019. The two Young Farmers' Clubs successfully applied to the Woodland Trust during the summer for 120 sapling trees to help with a nationwide effort to improve the environment during the Government's Year of Green Action.

Mat Dawson, Vice Chair of Oundle YFC said: "I really wanted to be involved with this activity as I wanted to do my bit for the environment"

And Grace Millbank, Oundle YFC Chair: "The tree planting was actually really enjoyable, and a great way to get a varied age group together, out in the countryside!"

Councillor Tony Everard, Chair of Pytchley Parish Council, said 'We're very grateful to the Woodland Trust for supplying the trees and to Thrapston Young Farmers for planting them. The Parish Council was pleased to support this project which links into two important topical issues, the environment and mental wellbeing. It was too good an opportunity to miss.'

There is further information about the #ProtectYourFuture project at www.nfyfc.org.uk/ProtectYourFuture/ProtectYourFuture and details of the #ReachingOut project can be found at www.northants-yfc.org.uk

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Editor's Notes:

Photographs are attached. More can be provided on request.

The National Federation of Young Farmers' Clubs (NFYFC) is one of the largest youth organisations in the UK. It heads a nationwide body of 615 Young Farmers' Clubs (YFCs) located throughout England and Wales dedicated to supporting young people in agriculture and the countryside. Their memberships comprise more than 24,500

members aged 10 to 26 and they provide a unique opportunity for members to develop skills, work with the local community, travel abroad, take part in a varied competitions programme and enjoy a dynamic social life. There are a further 1,100 associate members, many of whom are involved in the running of the clubs and NFYFC. For more information about NFYFC, visit www.nfyfc.org.uk.

The government launched its 25 year environmental plan in 2019 and started with a Year of Green Action driven by the #iwill4nature campaign. The #iwill campaign, Defra, and a group of 25 environment and youth-sector partners want to keep young people at the heart of environmental social action. The National Federation of Young Farmers' Clubs is one of the 25 partner organisations that make up the Environmental Steering group of the #iwill campaign.

Northampton Town & County Federation of Young Farmers' Clubs (Northants YFC) is affiliated to the National Federation and is made up of five Clubs across the county and a total of around 250 members mainly in the 14 – 26 age group. It is not necessary to be a farmer or from a farming background in order to join a Young Farmers' Club. For more information about Northants YFC visit www.northants-yfc.org.uk

The #ReachingOut project, funded by local business Scotts of Thrapston, aims to raise awareness of Northants YFC and its value as a support mechanism for young people at risk of rural and social isolation; to support Young Farmers and the wider farming community by providing information on mental health and wellbeing, suicide awareness and self-harm; to educate the next generation in order to reduce the stigma around mental health and create an environment where it is acceptable to talk about mental health issues; and to signpost vulnerable young people to appropriate support services. We are working in partnership with the Farming Community Network on this project. For more information about Farming Community Network visit www.fcn.org.uk

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