

GrassRoots

The latest news from Reaseheath College

Issue 24

Proud day for
graduates

See pages 2, 3 and 4

In this issue



Adam Henson is
Guest of Honour
See pages 2, 3 and 4



Monty Don admires our
show garden
See page 10



Monty Roberts and Kelly Marks
'Join Up' with Equine
See page 12

Find us on Facebook
www.facebook.com/reaseheathcollege



Follow us on Twitter
www.twitter.com/reaseheath



GrassRoots

Proud Day for Reaseheath Graduates

Reaseheath graduates were joined by television personality and farmer Adam Henson at an awards ceremony to celebrate their outstanding academic achievements.

The ceremony, in St Mary's Church, Nantwich, marked the graduation of 152 students who had completed degrees in agriculture, equine science, food technology, horticulture, machinery dealership management and countryside management. The qualifications are delivered in partnership with Harper Adams University.

Special mention was made of Emma Carr, Miriam Howarth, Helen Lightfoot, Sarah Rainford and Natasha Warren, who all achieved First Class Honours in Equine Science.

It was celebration time, too, for 31 Access to Higher Education students, who had gained a qualification allowing them to continue their studies at degree level. Many are returning to learning after a break or are changing careers.

Describing the ceremony as the highlight of the academic year, our Principal, Meredydd David, said that a degree was a passport to work and a successful career. He emphasised that, against a trend of rising unemployment, 90% of last year's graduates were in related employment within six months on an average salary of £21,200. The need for highly skilled and able people to lead innovation and help solve challenges had never been greater.

Guest speaker Adam Henson, who presents the BBC's popular 'Countryfile', said that the food and farming industries were on

the crest of a wave and offered very exciting and rewarding opportunities. Next generation farmers had to balance cutting edge technology with social and environmental responsibility. They also needed to be professional and business minded.

After the ceremony Adam toured our campus and took part in a discussion with some of our 400-plus agriculture students.

He said: "I was very impressed with Reaseheath's facilities and with the efforts the college makes to prepare students for the world of work. The students obviously understand the far reaching issues affecting their industry."

Reaseheath has 600 students studying on full and part-time degree courses. Animal management and science students on programmes validated by the University of Chester graduated at a separate ceremony.



▼ The Principal of Harper Adams University, David Llewellyn, Chair of Governors Emily Thrane and Reaseheath Principal Meredydd David with guest speaker Adam Henson



▼ Adam Henson joins agriculture students working with Reaseheath Holsteins



▼ It's celebration time outside St Mary's Church



Food graduates Sophie Landreth, Charlotte Kettle, Laura Newton, Rachel Frankish and James Yuill celebrate with Adam Henson



Agriculture graduates Amy Atkin, Phillip Berry, Jessica Hurren, Andrew Vickers, Sam Thelwall, Kirsty Belfield and Ben Thornley with Adam Henson



Equine Science graduates Lucy Dent, Alexandra Betts-Harrison, Helen Lightfoot, Sarah Rainford, Ruth Gresham, Rachael Woolley, Jessica Clayton, Kaylee Gow, Gemma Charles, Gemma Bonstead and Emma Carr



Countryside graduates James Roberts, Robert Cole, Annemarie Belcher, Tracy Walker, Naomi Boult, Mike Inger, Catherine Cole, Baz Fewster, Matt Cotterill, Allison Cooper and Christian Pearce



First Class Equine Science graduates Emma Carr, Helen Lightfoot and Sarah Rainford with Adam Henson



Machinery Dealership Management graduates Ben Jarzyna, Laura Bownes, Gary Milner and Tom Moss are joined by Adam Henson



Horticulture graduates Craig Bailey, Thomas Green, Jennifer Edmonstone, Tristan Jackson, Sian Bury and Angela Fearon with course manager Sarah Hopkinson and Adam Henson

Eden graduates are the cream of the crop



The first dairy technologists to achieve a specialist, globally recognised, qualification, delivered only by Reaseheath, had their degrees conferred at our graduation ceremony.

Twenty-five technologists, who are employed by the industry's leading companies, were applauded by their families, industry leaders and mentors.

The graduates, who achieved a Foundation Degree in Dairy Technology, are employed by Arla Foods, Dairy Crest, First Milk, Milk Link, Muller Dairies and Robert Wiseman Dairies.

They were the first to complete the 'Eden' programme, an award winning education initiative developed by Reaseheath in close collaboration with our dairy industry partners and through Dairy UK and the National Skills Academy for Food and Drink. The programme is aimed at addressing specific skills shortages and to enable the UK industry to be at the cutting edge of hi-tech dairy processing and manufacturing.

The students are based in the Eden International Dairy Academy, our £5 million, world class, dairy training centre. Financed partly by industry, the centre offers dairy processing facilities which are recognised as the best offered by any college.

Two graduates received special awards along with their degrees. Kayleigh Brock, who is employed by Robert Wiseman Dairies, received the National Skills Academy (NSA) 'Eden Graduate of the Year' award while Daryl Craven, who

works for Arla Foods, took the Festo Automation 'Student of the Year' award.

Justine Fosh, Executive Director of the NSA Food and Drink, said that the training scheme offered fantastic career opportunities to students who were willing to work hard and showed dedication and ambition. Reaseheath was producing some brilliant graduates who were exactly what the dairy processing industry required.

Dairy UK Director General, Jim Begg, said: "The graduation of the first Eden students marks a special day for the dairy industry. These students have worked hard on what was created to be the best dairy course anywhere in the world. They can now play an important part in developing the UK's highly efficient and globally competitive dairy industry. We congratulate them on their achievement, and hope they will inspire fellow Eden students for years to come".



▼ Emma Wood, Vicki Murby, Liam Brown, Troy Binch and Daryl Craven from Arla Foods



▼ Dairy Crest graduates Paul Leslie, Irfan Siddiqi, Matthew Williams and Primo Szaja with Adam Henson



▼ First Milk Manufacturing Director Paul Rowe, with graduates Fiona Andrew and Dawn Mason



▼ Milk Link's Craig Hodgson and Halfdan Bunch with Adam Henson



▼ Wiseman graduates Filip Mackowiak, Matthew Whitfield, Alex Duckworth, Kevin Yau and Kayleigh Brock with Steven Meadows from Muller Dairies

Farming minister applauds Reaseheath's role in food and farming

Our key role in helping to develop the food production industry has been applauded by Farming Minister David Heath.

The Minister visited Reaseheath as part of a fact finding tour of rural communities and businesses. He toured our campus farm and cutting edge food centre and officially opened our new Higher Education and Professional Development Centre.

Describing the current period as 'exciting times', Mr Heath said: "I am hugely optimistic about the future of agriculture and food. We need to be able to feed people throughout the world efficiently, effectively and sustainably. Reaseheath College plays a very important part in this.

"My visit here has been extraordinarily interesting. The great thing for me is that young people are coming into college



David Heath officially opens our Higher Education and Professional Development Centre with Chair of Governors Emily Thrane and Principal Meredydd David



David Heath enjoys a joke in the bakery

and going out with skills which will enable them to become leaders in industry. There are great facilities here bringing immediately transferable skills to industry and serious employment to students."

Mr Heath was particularly impressed with the specialised technical facilities in our food centre, which has a dairy processing plant and industry standard butchery and bakery. He also visited our high yielding dairy herd and commercial pig unit.

Agricultural staff and students had a chance to put

forward their views about the future of farming during a frank discussion with the minister.

Principal Meredydd David, said: "We were delighted to welcome the minister, who was hugely impressed with the work we do to support rural industries. He was amazed by the facilities and by the specialisation that takes place at Reaseheath. He was particularly impressed by our deep involvement with industry and by the knowledge and enthusiasm of our staff and students."

Work starts on new halls of residence

Construction of our new halls of residence is well under way. Aimed for completion for the new student intake in September 2013, the 150 room building will bring the total of our onsite student accommodation to 600.

As in our other halls, all rooms are en-suite and have shared kitchens. There is special provision for students with disabilities.

Work on our new fitness and sports centre, including a floodlit pitch, will start as soon as planning permission is received. The two new projects

will cost around £7 million, bringing the total investment across campus in the past few years to £40 million.

These two latest schemes will further enhance the quality of facilities and resources on campus for students and staff. They are a further indication of the success and reputation of Reaseheath, both of which make our college such a popular choice for students and parents.

Consultation on a new campus strategy will begin shortly. This will ensure



Artists impression of our new halls of residence

that we have a strategically planned and developed campus which maintains its character and charm while continuing to deliver a wonderful learning and

working environment.

New buildings opened in 2012 include a dining and social area, an adventure sports centre and the John Platt Centre for Agriculture.

GrassRoots Study Tours

Sports turf students gain international tournament experience

Our sports turf students gained valuable work experience helping to prepare for an international golf tournament in Greece.

Seven trainee greenkeepers, accompanied by lecturers Gareth Phillips and Chard Spicer, were based at The Crete Golf Club for a week preparing the championship golf course for the Crete Ladies Open 2012, a new tournament which attracted competitors from around the world.

The students used the opportunity to study the management of warm and cool season grasses.

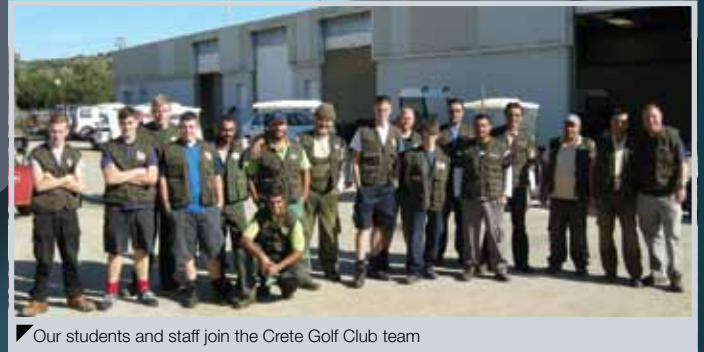
They also learned first hand about managing a tournament under extreme

climatic conditions, as they battled heavy rain and flooding followed by gale force winds.

The whole trip was so useful that there are plans to repeat it next year.

Said student Jamie Moul: "It was a great experience which will look really good on our CVs. Although it was hard work, it was a chance to learn about looking after grasses under conditions which are different to those in the UK."

The work experience was made possible thanks to a proposed joint venture between Reaseheath and The Crete Golf Club. Gareth is working on an outreach programme for greenkeepers and landscape



Our students and staff join the Crete Golf Club team

gardeners which would be offered during the winter months on Crete.

The work based qualifications, identical to those earned by our students, are certified by the Greenkeepers

Training Committee and are recognised throughout Europe. They are aimed at enhancing students' skills, knowledge and employability in a growing leisure market.

See www.crete-golf.com

Paralympic Games inspire sports students



Sports students enjoy their Paralympic experience at the Olympic Stadium

Our sports studies students were blown away after watching the world's best athletes compete at the London 2012 Paralympic Games.

Students studying for their Level 3 Diploma Sport (Performance and Excellence), returned inspired after enjoying a VIP day at the Olympic Stadium.

The group were offered free seats just 25 metres from the finish line through Podium, the Further and Higher Education Unit for the 2012 games.

Highlights included David Weir's second gold medal in the wheelchair category, visually

impaired runner David Devine taking bronze in the 1500m race and the women's relay winning a bronze medal.

The students watched a total of 12 finals in the stadium's evening performance and also watched GB athletes contest wheelchair tennis and blind five a side football.

Programme Leader for Sports Studies Kevin Cunningham said: "The strapline of the games was 'to inspire a generation' and the students were certainly inspired. They absolutely loved it and came home buzzing."

It's onwards and upwards for adventure sports



Adventure sports students get to grips with wild places in Snowdonia

Thirty five adventure sports students enjoyed a five day expedition to North Wales aimed at developing industry experience and their own personal skills.

The students discovered and explored wild places as part of their John Muir Award and for their Level 3 course studies. John Muir was the founder of the modern conservation movement. His award scheme encourages awareness in and responsibility for the natural environment.

Accompanied by five staff, the students travelled on foot and

by kayak through remote parts of the Snowdonia National Park, staying in tents and simple mountain shelters.

Said student Connor Bladen: "The expedition was great. We got to explore the mountains of Snowdon and to look at the magnificent views. Some of it was quite tough so we had to learn to be self reliant as well as working as a team."

During the trip six students completed training for their Climbing Wall Award, ensuring they are further qualified to meet the needs of their industry.

Equine students act the part at HOYS

Equine students who were part of the arena party at the Horse of the Year Show (HOYS) in Birmingham also performed under the spotlight as soldiers in an equine extravaganza.

Fifteen of the 36 students had a crash course in acting so they could appear as extras in 'The Final Charge', a World War I battle re-enactment. Those who weren't marching, charging, shooting or dying were busy building a wall from sand bags and moving props. The show, put on by Atkinson Action Horses, had HRH Princess Anne as a spectator for one of its evening performances.

In addition to their acting duties, our students built and changed the showjumping courses in the international arena - a slick operation where every second counted.

This is the second year running that we have provided an arena party to help keep the UK's most prestigious horse show running to schedule.



The Reaseheath arena party in front of the Puissance wall

Led by FE Programme Leader Sarah Turner and Course Manager Kerry Nunns, our team were on duty for five days working alongside international course designers Bob Ellis, Kelvin Bywater and Bernado Costa Cabral. They did such a professional job that they have already been booked as the arena party for next year.

Bob Ellis, who was lead course designer for the London 2012 Olympics, said: "Reaseheath's arena party has been excellent. Not only have the students worked very hard and earned something



Equine students act as soldiers during an equine extravaganza at HOYS

amazing to add to their CVs, they've had fun as well.

"The beauty about this job is that it promotes excellent team work. I think, from the college's

point of view, that it brings the students together and gives them an experience which would be difficult to replicate anywhere else."

French tour focuses on Limousin breeding

Agriculture students and lecturers visited France to see how Limousin cattle are managed in their native country.

The Level 3 Extended Diploma in Agriculture students enjoyed a study tour to Limoges, a central area which is famed for beef breeding.

Our group were guests of Les Vaseix College, one of the country's leading land based colleges. As well as organising three days of activities, our hosts provided transport and accommodation on campus.

The trip was made possible through agriculture lecturer Graham Ashford's links with

Les Vaseix and also through his connections with the British Limousin Society. It was so successful that there are hopes it could lead to regular exchanges, as lecturers at Les Vaseix are keen to encourage their students to see UK farming best practices.

The trip included a tour of the Bull Testing Centre at Lanaud and a lecture on the genetic improvements to the Limousin breed.

Our group also looked at the intensive and extensive methods of raising beef cattle at the farm of former Les Vaseix student Eric Belingard, and at



Agriculture students look at Limousin cattle breeding in France

his secondary enterprise raising calves for the veal market.

One afternoon was spent on the Les Vaseix farm, looking at the college's Limousin herd and at its pig and sheep units.

Our students were particularly interested in a project to bring forward lambing to Autumn, enabling sales to take advantage of the higher value market post Christmas.

Animal management students look to the future

Over 500 animal management students visited at least three zoos, museums or educational centres during a series of events focused on employability.

The behind-the-scenes trips encouraged the students to think about their future careers and also supported modules in zoo health, animal behaviour and sustainability. The events were part of a busy, campus wide, schedule put on during Colleges Week, a national celebration of the work done by colleges to prepare students for the world of work.

The students are all studying on further education courses, worth up to three 'A' levels.

A total of 15 visits were arranged to Dudley Zoo, Blackpool Zoo, the Welsh Mountain Zoo, Knowsley Safari Park, Twycross Zoo,



Animal management students Tiffany Walker, Rebecca Green, Alice See, Charise Erskine and Lucy Moses make the most of the natural history department at Liverpool Museum

Martin Mere Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust, Chester Zoo, Brookside Farm, Blackbrook Zoo, Conkers Sustainability Centre, Birmingham Nature Centre, Liverpool Museum and Manchester Museum.

Level 3 Diploma in Animal Management student

Rebecca Green, who wants to be a zoo keeper or scientific researcher said: "Liverpool museum was a really interesting trip which gave us a lot to think about and discover. I really enjoyed the exhibits on the natural world as it's an area I am hoping to work in."

Giant pandas are highlight of zoo visit

Animal management students had the chance to learn first hand about a giant panda breeding programme during a guided trip round Edinburgh Zoo.

The behind-the-scenes visit was a highlight of a study tour to Edinburgh enjoyed by 88 animal management students and seven staff.

Our students had the privilege to observe Tian Tian, a female giant panda which, with mate Yang Guan, is the focus of a globally important breeding programme. They also had the opportunity to talk to keepers about the management of the iconic animals and to study the design of their new enclosures.

Giant pandas are one of the most endangered species in the world and are notoriously



The animal management department makes its first trip to Edinburgh

difficult to breed. The design of their enclosures is critical, as they have to be kept separately, but near enough to allow them to be aware of each other.

The visit was arranged for Level 3 students who are studying their zoo health and husbandry module. Our

group also toured the rest of zoo, attended presentations about individual enclosure design and talked to education officers.

During their three day visit, our students also went to Edinburgh's Natural History Museum and the Charles Darwin Exhibition.

Florists learn from those at the top



International florist David Ragg during his demonstration

Floristry students and staff watched some of the biggest names in the industry exhibiting, demonstrating and competing when they attended FleurEx 2012, the UK's biggest floristry convention.

FleurEx is run in the Midlands by the British Floristry Association. It is recognised as the most prestigious event in the florists' calendar and is packed with demonstrations and displays by international suppliers. We attend each year, when possible.

Students from our City & Guilds Level 2 Diploma in Floristry and evening leisure classes, accompanied by tutor Fiona Davies and technician Vicky Venn, spent a fantastic day at the event.

Highlights included watching renowned international designers David Ragg and David Denyer as they created stunning designs on the main stage. Our group also watched a demonstration on packaging by another world class florist, Neil Whittaker, and took a professional interest in the designs put forward in a range of floristry and floral art competitions.

Reaseheath's a Cheshire Show winner

Reaseheath visitor friendly exhibition was voted best outside trade stand at the Cheshire Show.

We took top honours for the second year running after judges gave full marks for the enthusiasm of our staff and students and the diversity of activities offered to visitors.

The second day of the show coincided with VQ Day, a national celebration of vocational qualifications, and we took the opportunity to showcase the success of our students.

Top crowd puller on the stand was an eco house built from



Reaseheath staff Mark Hardy, Mark Walton, Janet Beardmore, Glyn Ferriday, Liam Prince, Emma Hunt and Liz Green on our Cheshire Show stand

straw bales by construction staff and students. Other activities, under the banner 'Do Something Different', included a climbing wall, a

mechanical horse, 'have a go' at bricklaying and sports fitness and engineering challenges. Animals from our campus zoo were also on show.

Reaseheath cheese wins gold at Cheshire Show



Naboth Tinarwo with the winning Cheshire cheese

Travel beckons for high flying agriculturalists

Three high flying young Cheshire agriculturalists are looking forward to worldwide travel thanks to a scholarship organised through Reaseheath.

Dairy vet Nicola Fair and dairy farmers Adam Brown and Paul Billington were presented with £2,000 John Platt Travel Scholarships at the Cheshire Show.

All three are using their scholarships to gain a deeper insight into research and technology and new or alternative farming methods which could help the region's agricultural businesses become more profitable.

Nicola, 28, visited America to look at steps being taken to maximise cow welfare. She went to the veterinary research unit at the University of Madison Wisconsin, to see advances in tackling lameness and metabolic disease as part of the Dairyland Initiative.

Nicola is an Extension Officer for DairyCo AHDB, part of the Agricultural and Horticultural Development Board. She



Nicola Fair, Adam Brown and Paul Billington receive their scholarships from John Platt and Vice Principal Dave Kynaston at the Cheshire Show

promotes best practice among groups of Cheshire and Staffordshire farms.

Adam, 24, has helped to develop a business plan to build an anaerobic digestion plant at his family's dairy farm. He has already visited America and Germany and will travel to Italy in 2013 to learn about similar enterprises. As well as working on the farm he is studying for his Advanced Apprenticeship in Agriculture with us and plans to progress to a Foundation

Degree in Agriculture.

Paul, 26, wants to visit southern Ireland to learn how the dairy industry is gearing up for the removal of milk quotas in 2015. He is especially interested in how pasture based farms are managing to expand in a country where land values are high and parcels are fragmented.

He plans to visit Moorepark, one of the world's leading dairy research centres, and to attend the Positive Farming conference in Limerick.

A mature Cheshire cheese made by dairy technology students took a top prize at the Cheshire Show.

The cheese, made from local milk, took the Gold award in a section specifically for Cheshire cheeses. The 20kg block was selected by judges above entries from some of the UK's top cheesemakers.

The cheese was made in our specialist Food Centre by four Project Eden students who are studying for an internationally recognised Foundation Degree in Dairy Technology. (see page 4)

The winning team were second year students Kirsty MacDonald and Anna Emchenko (Robert Wiseman Dairies), Simon Grills (Milk Link) and Ant Hobson (Arla Foods).

Technical Manager Naboth Tinarwo collected the trophy on behalf of the students.

He said: "This was a great achievement, particularly as the win was against strong competition from leading commercial manufacturers."

Show garden wins approval from wildlife detection dogs

Wildlife detection dogs Twister and Luna proved you don't have to sacrifice beauty for the bees by checking out our show garden at the RHS Flower Show Tatton Park.

The specially trained dogs and handler Louise Wilson joined our garden design and horticulture students to test whether our wildlife friendly garden was as attractive to nature as it was to people.

Louise, 30, a former Reaseheath animal behaviour and welfare student, has trained Springer Spaniel Twister and Labrador Luna to seek out endangered species. Fortunately our 'Nature Squared' garden received full approval from both dogs and the show judges and it was awarded a silver gilt medal.

The garden was designed by our students to make a positive contribution to bio diversity through 'habitat areas' planted with widely



▶ Louise Wilson, Twister and Luna on Reaseheath's show garden 'Nature Squared'

available, cultivated plants. It was much admired by gardening guru Monty Don, who presented BBC2 coverage of the event from the garden and chatted to Foundation Degree in Garden and Landscape Design student Angela Fearon.

Angela designed and managed the project



▶ Garden landscape student Angela Fearon chats to Monty Don

alongside fellow students Jane Houghton, Robert Frost, Lee McDermott and Jenny Edmonstone. The garden was built by a team of student volunteers from a range of horticulture courses.

The project was sponsored by Trentham Gardens and is being rebuilt at the popular visitor attraction near Stoke on Trent. It has joined The Secret Garden, our medal winning show garden from RHS Flower Show Tatton

Park 2011, which was also sponsored by Trentham Gardens.

Louise is managing director of 'Conservation Dogs', a team of canines who are specialists in finding pine marten scats, dormouse nests and great crested newts and can be trained to sniff out bees, butterflies and other beneficial insects.

See www.conservationdogs.com; www.trentham.co.uk/trentham-gardens

Florists celebrate RHS Flower Show success

Our florists were celebrating after being awarded a silver-gilt medal for their display in the floral design studio at RHS Flower Show Tatton Park.

Their contemporary orange, cerise and lime display, combining delicate blooms and wirework, wowed the judges at the prestigious five day show. The flowers were a mix of British grown flowers including tropical anthuriums and orchids.

Said florist Fiona Davies:

"We were thrilled with our achievements this year. It really shows that Reaseheath can compete and win alongside the best."

Adrian Thomas of Verdure Floral Design, who has completed his Level 3 Diploma in Floristry with us and is planning to study for his Level 4 Higher Diploma, won a silver medal.

We have been a consistent medal winner in both garden design and floristry at the RHS Flower Show Tatton Park for the past decade.



▶ Florist Fiona Davies on Reaseheath's medal winning stand

Talented landscaper makes final squad

Talented Reaseheath landscape gardener Matt Beesley has qualified for the potential GB squad for WorldSkills 2013.

He was one of six students nationwide to pass the final selection process, held at the RHS Flower Show Tatton Park.

Matt is now going through an intensive training programme covering hard landscaping, plant knowledge and management skills run by WorldSkillsUK. The initiative aims to discover the country's most talented young craftspeople and drive up levels of expertise.

Just two of the six finalists will eventually represent GB in the WorldSkills final, a bi-annual, global, Olympics

style competition for students aged 23 and under, to be held in 2013 in Leipzig, Germany. Over 100 students have gone through the selection process. Another Reaseheath student, Joshua Antrobus, made it through to the final 12.

The competition at the RHS Flower Show Tatton Park saw the students building four gardens from detailed plans over three and a half days. It was a real test of stamina and skills, particularly during the final day when the show opened to the public. The gardens were judged to exacting RHS standards.

Matt has just completed his Level 3 Extended Diploma in



Talented landscape gardener Matt Beesley on one of the WorldSkillsUK competition gardens at RHS Flower Show Tatton Park

Horticulture with us and runs his own business, Beesleys Landscapes.

He said: "This has been a fantastic experience for me.

I have learned so much and gained such a lot of confidence. I'd particularly like to thank my hard landscape instructor, Jason Hinks, for his support."

Support for Welsh farming



Daisy our RAG mascot, otherwise known as Marketing Manager Glyn Ferriday, makes an appearance at the Royal Welsh Show

Reaseheath underlined its support for the farming community in Wales by sponsoring the finals of the Welsh Young Farmers' competition at the prestigious Royal Welsh Show for the second year running.

Our Principal, Meredydd David, joined other key supporters to present trophies to the winners of what must be the most hotly contested events in the annual Welsh farming calendar. The finals

were held throughout the four day show and hundreds of friends and family congregated at the dedicated stage each day to hear the results.

We also sponsored the 'All Wales YFC Shearing Finals', which took place in the Meirionnydd Shearing Centre.

And it was our turn to celebrate when our show stand received the 'Royal Welsh Award of Merit' after being judged the best educational stand.

Dairy herd award



Dairy Herd Manager Steve Small shows off the Cheshire Farms award

Our agriculture staff were over the moo.....n after Reaseheath Holsteins picked up third prize in the Premier Dairy Herd category in this year's Cheshire Farms Competition. This was no mean feat, as we were up against the top herds in what is arguably the top dairy county in the country.

Our 240 cow, high merit, dairy herd was purchased in 2010 from Genus to give our agricultural students the

chance to work with a world class herd. We also have 200 home bred youngstock to provide replacement cows for the herd. This gives our students a unique opportunity to prepare and exhibit top class calves in the show ring as well as gaining practical skills in our dairy unit.

Our cows are milked three times a day and the average annual yield per cow is a stunning 11,000 litres of milk.

GrassRoots

Monty 'Joins Up' with Reaseheath

Our equestrian centre held its biggest and most high profile event yet when we were privileged to host a masterclass by world renowned horse behaviourist Monty Roberts.

Over 1,000 people watched as Monty, who is best known as 'the man who listens to horses', worked his magic on five horses who were either untrained or had problems. The masterclass was so popular that many visitors were still with us at 11pm.

The demonstration was part of a UK tour by Monty of premier equine centres and was the first major event overseen by Becky Erskine in her role as Equine Events Co-ordinator. It was rated by Monty as being in the top 10% of all the masterclasses he had



Monty Roberts and Kelly Marks 'join up' with Becky Erskine, Steve Roach, students Josh Britton and Alex Jefferies and Ice the horse

done from a horseman's point of view. He and his British protégé, Kelly Marks, were very complimentary about the facilities and about the helpful attitude of our staff and students.

Monty is an award-winning trainer of championship horses, best-selling author,

Hollywood stunt man, foster dad to 47 children (in addition to three of his own) and creator of the world-renowned and revolutionary equine training technique called JoinUp. He regularly trains The Queen's racehorses and riding horses - and sometimes, her corgis.

Top achievement for sporty Kirsty



Winning gymnast Kirsty Robertson

Entry level student Kirsty Robertson returned home with a fistful of medals from the Special Olympics GB 2012 gymnastics competition in Cardiff.

Kirsty, who suffers from autism, won gold for her vaulting, two silvers medals for rhythmic gymnastics on the floor and bar and bronze for exercises on the beam.

When she's not at college, Kirsty regularly practices alongside fellow gymnastics at the Cheshire Academy in Crewe. A seasoned competitor, she regularly represents her club and has won lots of medals.

Kirsty is in her second year with us and is particularly enjoying working with dogs in our animal management department. She also likes studying maths and English in the classroom.

Entry Level Course Management Cath Pilsbury said: "The whole team is very proud of Kirsty's achievements. She is very passionate about her gymnastics and works very hard so that she can perform at the highest level. She is a true representative of the spirit of the Special Olympics, which isn't just about winning but values the effort you put in to give your best performance."

Using horses as teachers

Our Entry and Foundation Department is successfully using natural horsemanship methods to help learners and staff.

Taking elements from techniques used by Monty Roberts, Kelly Marks and other practitioners who specialise in non-verbal cues and body language, the department has developed an equine assisted learning programme in which horses have become the teachers.

Around 30 staff and over 100 students have already benefited from workshops which involve team work with an equine partner. The initiative is being led by Foundation Instructor Lisa Brewitt. Very few UK centres offer this type of training.

The programme was initially aimed at Pre-Entry to Level 1 students with learning



Pre Entry student Jessica Walker makes friends with Frankie the pony

difficulties, particularly those with autism and anxiety behaviour. It can develop self confidence, self esteem, communication, problem solving and team work.

The workshops have been so successful that they have been taken up by visiting specialist schools for their students. Lisa has also run staff workshops

which include the theory behind the importance of non verbal communication.

External professionals from specialist schools, colleges and secure units have also used the workshops for Continuing Professional Development.

For further information, email: lisab@reaseheath.ac.uk

Graduate wins prestigious thesis award

Equine science graduate Sarah Rainford has won the prestigious Eqvalan Duo Equine Thesis of the Year, beating off strong competition from other colleges.

Sarah graduated this year with a First Class (Hons) BSc Degree in Equine Science. She put forward her final year thesis, which discussed whether horse riding can successfully increase joint mobility in physically disabled children. She became interested in the subject after doing work experience with Riding for the Disabled at the Foxes Riding School, Wirral, and carried on with the topic for her second year research project.

On reaching the final, at Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire, Sarah competed against entrants from Writtle College,

the Royal Agricultural College, Anglia Ruskin University and the University of Limerick. She had to present her dissertation to a panel of four judges and respond to tough questioning.

The Royal Agricultural Society of England makes the award in recognition of the exceptional equine academic achievements recorded by colleges and universities.

Dr. Emma Batson from sponsors Merial Animal Health commented: "This competition showcases the high achievement and ambitious scope of the academic research within our industry. The short listed theses were of a very high quality and will help to further our understanding of the horse and of the equine industry in which we work."

Sarah intends to become a lecturer in equine science. She



Top thesis: Sarah Rainford

said: "It was a great honour to gain this award. I have loved studying for my degree at Reaseheath and I would like to thank my lecturers, Dr Jan Birch and Kate Hayward, for their support, both throughout my course and during this competition."

Top marks for dressage riders



Penny Ehlen and Zarna with their dressage trophy.
Photograph: Weddings by Alexandra

Keen dressage riders Jo Glover and Penny Ehlen were top of the leader board after a series of unaffiliated dressage competitions at our Equestrian Centre.

An award for the most successful combination of the season went to Jo and her horse 'In Vogue' who took the Ashworth Memorial Trophy for the most points overall. Penny, 14, and her pony 'Zarna' won the Gemineye Merit Cup for competitors in the restricted section who have accumulated most points throughout the year. Penny and her sister, Holly, compete regularly against riders of all ages.

A trophy for the most points gained by a member of Reaseheath's Equestrian Club went to Gillian Butters and 'Benedict'.

We hold monthly unaffiliated dressage competitions offering classes from introductory (walk and trot) to elementary level, along with popular test riding practice days. British Dressage affiliated competitions are also held at Reaseheath.

We also offer monthly unaffiliated showjumping competitions, plus a full programme of short courses, clinics and lecture demonstrations. Our indoor and outdoor arenas are for hire.

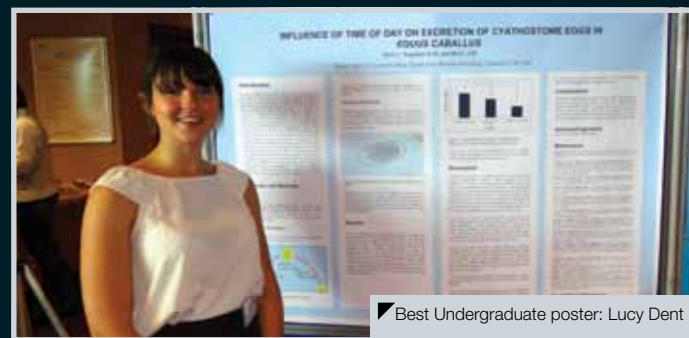
Further details see www.reaseheath.ac.uk/equine phone 01270 616482 or email Rebecag@reaseheath.ac.uk

Equine's key contribution to international conference

Reaseheath's Equine department made a key contribution to an international conference which brought together leading experts.

The Winning Ways Conference, held at Aintree Racecourse, showcased the latest scientific research and innovative ideas about the training, health, nutrition and movement of performance horses. It was part of a global programme organised by the International Conference for Equine Exercise Physiology (ICEEP) and attracted professional riders and trainers, therapists, graduates and students from specialist colleges, universities and veterinary colleges.

Sixteen of our degree level students attended and seven of our staff were involved in



Best Undergraduate poster: Lucy Dent

managing or presenting horses in the performance horse section. We also organised the ICEEP Student Scientific Poster competition, which attracted undergraduate and postgraduate entries from around the world and was sponsored by the British Horse Society. Three of this year's First Class (Hons) BSc Equine Science graduates - Lucy Dent, Emma Carr and Helen

Lightfoot - presented their research projects, with Lucy taking the prize for the best undergraduate poster. Lucy's research highlighted differences in faecal egg counts during a 24 hour period.

We were highly involved with the conference because our Equine HE Programme Leader, Dr. Jan Birch, is a member of the national organising committee of ICEEP.

GrassRoots

Farming talent tested at Bootcamp

Reaseheath was the location for web tv series 'Farmers Apprentice', an Alan Sugar style bootcamp searching for the farming world's brightest new stars.

The five part series followed the progress of 10 farming hopefuls as they battled through a gruelling week of tests designed to put their business brains and their farming flair to the test. The competition, run by Farmers Weekly and sponsored by McDonald's UK, aimed to show the dynamic skills needed for a career in modern farming and had a £10,000 first prize.

The national finalists had to tackle challenging tasks including herding livestock, driving a technologically advanced tractor, making sausages in our Food Centre and pitching a watertight business plan.



Candidates for the Farmers Apprentices take on a sheep penning task

The judges included the Co-operative's Christine Tacon, Farmers Weekly 'Farmer of the Year' Charlie Russell and our own Sheep Unit Manager Matt Bagley.

The competition brought some high profile guest speakers on site including Caroline Drummond, Head of LEAF, who advised on a farm open day, Jane King (Editor of Farmers Weekly) and Wilfred Emmanuel (The Black Farmer).

The action was filmed by The Co-operative British Youth Film Academy, based in Crewe.

Said Jane King: "This is a huge platform for ten young people who are bursting with skills and ambition. We want non-farmers and people who have no connection to the countryside to tune in and see there are exciting, lucrative careers to be had in agriculture."

See www.farmersapprentice.co.uk

Apprenticeships are key to success



Successful farmers Will, Andrew, David and Peter Marrow with their parents George and Heather

Apprenticeships have been key to the continuing success of one of Cheshire's leading dairy farms.

All four of George and Heather Marrow's sons have completed or are currently on apprenticeship programmes at Reaseheath - and all are actively involved in the family's award winning business at Bagmere Farm near Sandbach.

Brothers Will, 24, Andrew, 22 and David, 21, are former Reaseheath apprentices while 19 year-old Peter is still training. All are keen to work together to expand the dairy business.

So inevitably it was a family affair when Bagmere Farm took the top award in the 250 - 500 acres category at this year's Cheshire County Farms Competition. The farm, which has a dairy herd of 380 cows, has won a number of awards in the Cheshire County Farms Competition in previous years including reserve overall champion.

Now its future looks secure, as the four brothers are keen to introduce new ideas which will help to take the business forward.

Said David: "Doing an apprenticeship at Reaseheath has been really helpful. We have looked at a range of different enterprises and the training we have received has encouraged us to work more efficiently and to be more business minded."

For further details about apprenticeships phone 01270 613257 or email clareh@reaseheath.ac.uk

Lewis' skills help business

Next generation farmer Lewis Harding has used the relevant skills he has learned at college to make a cost effective steel cattle weigh crush.

Helped by fellow student Thomas Hassall and with input from others studying for their Level 3 Diploma in Agriculture, Lewis designed the crush, selected and purchased the appropriate materials and cut the steel to length. He carried out significant welding processes to construct the substantial frame and access doors and added a chequer plated floor and weigh scales.

The crush, which can take finished animals up to 850kg in weight, has been added to the handling system at the Harding family's beef and pig farm and is regularly used to weigh



Lewis Harding with his cattle crush

suckler cows and support veterinary care.

Lewis, who has progressed onto a part-time Foundation Degree in Agriculture, said: "I have learned a lot of really useful, practical skills as well as the theory and business behind farming. I can now weigh the cattle quickly, safely and

accurately and from there make a decision on whether to send them to market."

Said Lecturer in Farm Mechanisation Alan Brown: "This was a superb project which involved working accurately from Lewis's design drawing and managing a construction schedule."

Research looks at growing for the future

Our Commercial Horticulture department is partnering our Enterprise Delivery Hub in a research project into more sustainable methods of growing crops.

The research, which is funded through the Rural Development Programme for England, is looking at increasing the use of Anaerobic Digestion by-products through:

- The use of digestate (the solid material left over from the AD process) as a sustainable growing medium for containerised ornamental and food crops
- The use of heat generated by the burning of biogas which is released as part of the anaerobic process

We are growing tomatoes in digestate from our AD plant, mixed with locally sourced and equally sustainable mediums. Horticultural Commercial Unit Supervisor Neil Bebbington has created

the blends and is recording plant growth.

From early 2013, full crops of tomatoes will be grown hydroponically in grow bags in a glasshouse using heat generated during the anaerobic digestion process. Neil will look at which compost blend produces the most viable crop and at whether a system using the generated heat could be a substitute for our traditional boiler house.

Dr Paul Challinor, Secretary of the UK Tomato Working Party, is advising on the project. The tomatoes will go into the college kitchens and food department for processing.

Our bespoke AD plant was commissioned in 2011 to demonstrate the viability of smaller scale renewable energy production on farms and horticultural businesses.

Project Leader Sam Grundy explained: "A key aim is



Reaseheath Horticulture's Commercial Production Supervisor; Neil Bebbington and Commercial Production Unit Assistant; Kirsty Sturdy, inspect the progress of some of the trial tomato plants with Level 2 Diploma Horticulture students

to explore alternative uses for AD by-products. It was natural to pair up with the horticulture industry, as it is entering an exciting period of change and innovation. This is especially due to concerns about the sustainability

and availability of peat as a growing medium.

"We are particularly keen to engage with industry and to facilitate knowledge transfer, as there has been very little research work done in this field."



The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development
Europe investing in rural areas

This project is supported by the Rural Development Programme for England, for which Defra is the Managing Authority, part financed by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development: Europe investing in rural areas.

RHS students celebrate success

One hundred part-time horticulture students have gained well recognised Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) qualifications – and celebrated great personal achievements – in the past academic year.

The students, who include professional horticulturists, career changers and leisure gardeners, study at Reaseheath or at our outreach centres at **Ness Botanic Gardens, Wirral**, and **Tatton Park, Knutsford**.

Reaseheath is a training and examination centre for RHS courses and we offer separate theory and practical qualifications at both Level 2 and Level 3. These courses

have benefited from a revision in the past two years and, as a result, have become increasingly popular. Once both theory and practical qualifications are achieved, they convert into an RHS Level 2 or Level 3 Diploma in Horticulture.

The revised RHS Level 2 practical course at Reaseheath has had such an enthusiastic response that we now offer it on two days a week.

Reaseheath's RHS Course Manager is Anne Harrison, supported by RHS Master of Horticulture Harry Delaney.

At **Tatton Park**, recently retired head gardener Sam Youd is delivering an RHS Level 2 theory course to keen



RHS students celebrate gaining their awards

gardeners aged from 20 to 70. The lectures are backed up with practical demonstrations in the world class gardens at Tatton. Students can progress to Level 3 theory or can opt to take their Level 2 practical course.

Students at **Ness Gardens** enjoy a similar offering from popular lecturer Louise Moss

(see page 21). The RHS Level 2 theory qualification will be offered from September 2013, and, again, students can progress to Level 3.

Louise is teaching additional courses in garden and planting design at Ness.

Further details: email suepa@reaseheath.ac.uk

Wildlife friendly hedge wins award

A species rich hedge on our farm has won an award because of its benefits to wildlife.

The award is part of an annual environmental competition organised by Cheshire Landscape Trust and supported by the Cheshire branch of the Campaign to Protect Rural England. Our hedge won its class for the excellence of its plant selection and its ongoing maintenance.

The hedge was planted four years ago and consists of native species of shrubs and trees chosen by students to be wildlife friendly and suitable for the soil conditions.

The selection of hazel, field maple, hawthorn, blackthorn, spindle, honeysuckle, dog rose, small leaved lime and holly now provides nectar, seeds and fruit for wildlife. It also provides an important habitat for small mammals and some



▲ Lecturer in countryside and arboriculture Leigh Cawley and Farm Manager Mark Yearsley with the prizewinning hedge

rare species of butterfly.

The plants were selected and planted by countryside and agriculture students, who have continued its maintenance. Students will practice their hedgelaying skills on it at a later date.

Reaseheath's farmland has been sensitively managed to meet and complement the requirements of wildlife for

many years. Our farmland includes ponds, field margins and hedges linked to provide wildlife corridors. The land is managed within the Higher and Lower Level environmental stewardship schemes organised through Defra and Natural England. It is part of an ongoing initiative to enable us to support wildlife diversity.

National Trust trainees graduate



▲ Top trainees Tim Fisher, Lynn Cassells, Neil Hoad and Jamie Harris with Reaseheath tutors Leigh Cawley and Ken Higginbotham, the National Trust's Mike Calnan, Sarah Staniforth and Vicki Povall and Martin McMillan, a National Gardens Scheme trustee

Trainee countryside wardens and gardeners graduated from The National Trust's Academy at an awards ceremony at Reaseheath.

The trainees, who work at the charity's historic properties nationwide, celebrated completing a tailor-made, three year training programme which we deliver.

Special awards went to two outstanding gardeners, Jamie Harris (National Trust Award for the Best Trainee Gardener) and Neil Hoad (James Row Memorial Award for Endeavour). Outstanding wardens were Tim Fisher (National Trust Award for the Best Trainee Warden) and Lynn Cassells (Gareth Seel Award for Endeavour)

Jamie works at Chartwell in Kent, the former home of Winston Churchill, while Neil is a gardener at Powis Castle, Powys. Tim is a warden at Wicken Fen National Nature Reserve, Cambridgeshire, while Lynn trained at The National Trust's Belfast estate and now works at Cliveden, Berkshire.

These were the last National Trust trainees to graduate from the careership scheme. The courses have now been redeveloped to deliver the modern skills required to manage heritage sites.

The trainee gardeners and wardens will still be based at National Trust properties and study at Reaseheath.

Further details: www.nationaltrust.org.uk

Students appreciate cutting edge groundcare equipment

Students and staff had the chance to update their knowledge about the latest groundcare equipment thanks to a visit from leading company Husqvarna.

Horticulture and countryside students and Level 2 Sportsturf apprentices from golf clubs and football clubs were among those to try out top of the range amenity mowers, strimmers, blowers, aerators and chainsaws and look at the latest in harness design and technology.

They were joined in this useful session, held on the sports field, by clients of Husqvarna.



▲ Senior Sports Turf Lecturer Gareth Phillips and Level 2 Sportsturf apprentices check out the Husqvarna stand

The knowledge exchange became a two way process, as Husqvarna representatives were equally interested in what our next generation managers thought of the equipment. After such a

successful event, we are keen to invite other industry representatives onto campus.

For further details, contact Horticulture Unit Manager James Grundy jamesg@reaseheath.ac.uk

Success could lead to Church Farm expansion

Our animal care outreach centre at Church Farm, Thurstaston, Wirral, is recording such outstanding results from students on our Level 2 Diploma in Animal Care that we are planning to launch a Level 3 Subsidiary Diploma in Animal Management there from September 2013.

Contact: louisel@reaseheath.ac.uk

 Find us on Facebook
www.facebook.com/reaseheathcollege

 Follow us on Twitter
www.twitter.com/reaseheath

Reaseheath gives rare spiders a helping hand

Keepers at our zoo have been fostering the minute offspring of one of the UK's rarest, largest and most spectacular spiders.

Four hundred fen raft spiderlings were hand reared in individual test tubes for three months until they reached a suitable size. They were then taken to a site in East Anglia and released onto the fens.

The project was part of a rear and release programme, overseen by Natural England, which is aimed at conserving British native species. Rearing the spiderlings in test tubes for the first critical three months can increase survival rates by 90%.

Other members of the British and Irish Association of Zoos and Aquariums (BIAZA), including Chester Zoo and Dudley Zoo, were involved in the initiative.

Student members of Reaseheath's Herpetological and Entomological Society assisted in the programme by recording data such as the size of brood, the number of times the spiderlings moulted and the type of food they consumed.



Keeper Lauren Lane releases the fen raft spiderlings into their natural habitat

Keeper Lauren Lane said: "It has been a rare privilege for Reaseheath to be involved in real conservation work. It is very rewarding rearing animals and putting them back into the wild. It has also been a great opportunity for staff and students to work alongside major conservation bodies and other collections.

"Hopefully this project could open the door to other programmes concerning the preservation of native species."

The fen raft spider translocation programme is a partnership between Natural

England, the Suffolk and Sussex Wildlife Trusts, The Broads Authority, the RSPB, BIAZA and the BBC Wildlife Fund.

- Reaseheath's Herpetological and Entomological Society gives student members the chance to gain a deeper understanding of reptiles, amphibians and invertebrates through regular meetings, zoo visits, guest speakers and field work.

Members of the public are welcome to join. Email lauren1@reaseheath.ac.uk

ZOO NEWS



Photograph: Tom Cornwell

It's hello.....

Our Amazon Milk Frogs have bred successfully for the first time.

The frogs have produced spawn three times, but this is the first time the eggs have fully developed into froglets.

This particular species is notoriously difficult to breed, so our amphibian keepers have been delighted with the new arrivals. Higher light levels in the breeding tanks are thought to be at least partly responsible for the success. Our staff and students are busy hatching a wide range of foods including fruit flies and crickets for the froglets, and they will receive a vitamin supplement.

The froglets were produced by two separate groups of animals, one received from London Zoo and the other from Chester Zoo.

The frogs get their name from the milky substance they secrete when stressed. We have a range of species of exotic frogs in our dedicated amphibian room.

ZOO NEWS

...and goodbye

Three of our Giant African Spur Thighed Tortoises have started a new life in France.

Stone, Pebbles and Volcano are to be a new exhibit at Mulhouse Zoo and Botanical Gardens in Alsace.

The tortoises, all males, outgrew their enclosure after being with us for five years. Stone, the oldest at 16, was a massive 16.6 kilos at his last weigh-in.

Stone and Pebbles were

originally bought as domestic pets and came to us from a rescue centre and a private owner. Volcano was a transfer from Exmoor Zoo.

Securing knowledgeable homes for animals from our collection is a priority, so we were delighted when Mulhouse Zoo offered to take our tortoises. Our two female Giant Tortoises, Emi and Mugogo, have remained at Reaseheath and will continue to provide a popular attraction when our zoo re-opens to the public during school holidays.



Zoo visitor Matthew Cannell and grandfather John Austin admire one of our tortoises

GrassRoots

Adventure sports students get tips from Mr Frostbite

Inspirational mountaineer Nigel Vardy gave our adventure sports students some tips on how to succeed against the odds during an action packed 'Adventure Day' at college.

Nigel, otherwise known as 'Mr Frostbite', told how he was plucked from the summit of Alaska's highest mountain with two fellow climbers after being injured in a fall.

Despite losing his finger tips, nose and toes to frostbite, Nigel still regularly climbs across the world and is a best selling author and motivational speaker.

Nigel spoke to our adventure sports students as part of an initiative to offer them even more exposure to the outdoor industry, giving them links to careers and inspiration to succeed. A successful film maker



Mountaineer Nigel Vardy with Adventure Sports staff Dan Bean, Richard Hathway, Tim Reeves, Sophie Bennett and Mick Keeling

himself, he also launched three student photo and film competitions.

Other activities included workshops and demos with leaders in the outdoor pursuits industry including Pyranha, a leading manufacturer of kayaks and canoes, and CITECH, trainers and advisors on bike safety and maintenance. There were also career oriented talks from Cotswold Outdoor Clothing, adventure work

specialists CCUSA, PGL and Canoe England, and from our own HE advisor Jayne Cawood on the process of applying to university.

We also had a very popular presentation from World Challenge on a proposed student expedition to Morocco. Feedback was extremely positive and the event immediately had results, with two students applying on the spot for summer jobs.

Sam is a Newsround hound



Sam Walton chats to Newsround presenter Hayley Cutts

Our Assistant Herd Manager Sam Walton was quizzed on the government's postponement of the badger cull for BBC Newsround.

Sam was interviewed about the issues surrounding badgers and the spread of bovine TB in the countryside. He responded to questions ranging from the postponement of the trial cull to the financial losses within the cattle industry caused by the disease.

No stranger to the media, Sam was a 'press packer' or junior reporter for Newsround when he was 11. At that time he reported on camera and blog about the foot and mouth crisis, which led to him having a month off school when the family farm was closed down. He is also a radio DJ.

Reaseheath students encourage pupils to appreciate their environment

Our adventure sports students gave pupils from The Dingle Primary School, Haslington, the chance to get closer to nature during two action-packed days of fun.

The 9 to 11 years were coached in a variety of outdoor activities using our gardens and classrooms. Our students helped the pupils to work towards their John Muir 'Discovery' Award, which encourages awareness of and responsibility for the natural environment.

At the same time, our students gained valuable leadership hours towards their Basic Expedition



Adventure sports students Leon Olechnowicz-Simpson and Tim Hales introduce Josh Murrell, Zak Hamblett, Natalia Zawisza and Freya Griffith to eco orienteering

Leaders Award. This is one of a range of national governing body awards offered by Reaseheath which is aimed at making the

students more employable.

The event was run as part of Colleges Week 2012, which focuses on how colleges successfully prepare their

students for the world of work.

The students organised activities which included making lanterns from willow and tissue paper, running an eco-orienteering trail in the college grounds and giving the pupils a taste of life under canvas.

Leon Olechnowicz-Simpson, who wants to be an adventure sports instructor said: "It was really useful to be able to develop leadership skills with this age group. I very much enjoyed introducing the pupils to outdoor activities and teaching them how to care for the environment."

Food Centre forges links with industry

Since the launch of Reaseheath's £7 million Food Centre last year, many local, national and international food and drink manufacturers have used our bespoke food halls for new product development or staff training.

Built to the exacting standards required by industry and regarded as the best at any college in Europe, our facilities include dairy processing halls and production areas for butchery, bakery and confectionery.

Recent clients include **Kraft Foods Europe**, a leading manufacturer of chocolate, biscuits, coffee, cheese and confectionery. We delivered a tailor-made training course for operators and engineers from the company's Marlbrook, Herefordshire, factory, who needed training prior to the installation of a new evaporator. The plant



▼ Kraft Foods engineers receive training in our food halls

processes fresh milk, sugar and cocoa for chocolate production.

The first course, held over

two days for ten operatives, received excellent feedback and we have since delivered a second course for more Kraft personnel.

The training included an explanation of the operational processes behind the Cleaning in Place (CIP) system on the evaporator. Thanks to the relatively small size of our kit, the engineers were able to see all of the system and gain a greater understanding of the processes.

Our training team was led by senior dairy technologist Derek Allen and lecturer Mark Ellis.

Although this was the first time that we have trained Kraft personnel at our Food Centre, we have previously delivered bespoke training at the company's headquarters.

A collaboration may also be on the cards with **Marks and Spencer** following a fact finding visit by Product



Developer for Dairy, Sylvia Griffin, and Technologist Kerry Newton.

Our visitors, who are based at the M&S head office in London, enjoyed a breakfast and lunch of products produced in our own bakery and dairy as well as a presentation and factory tour.

We have since delivered a milk sensory analysis course for the Proper Welsh Company, an M&S supplier.

For further details about Reaseheath's Food Centre see our industry aligned website www.reaseheathfoodcentre.com or contact Julie Bent, the Food Centre's Training and Communications Co-ordinator Email: julieb@reaseheath.ac.uk

Trainee dairy technologists celebrate second year success



▼ Kirsty MacDonald and Kelly Dearn receive their awards from Liz Pattison, Head of Skills Solutions at the National Skills Academy for Food and Drink

Two trainee dairy technologists were in line for special honours after completing the second year of their Foundation Degree in Dairy Technology with us.

Kirsty MacDonald, who works

for Robert Wiseman Dairies, was selected as Best Practical Student while Kelly Dearn, a Dairy Crest employee, was chosen as Best Academic Student.

New pig group gives farmers food for thought

Our new pig discussion group is enabling the regions' producers and our own students to benefit from the latest news and research from within the industry.

Set up and funded by RDPE Livestock Northwest, the initiative is promoting knowledge transfer through talks and discussions as well as providing a popular networking opportunity. The meetings, which are also supported by the British Pig Executive, feature specialist speakers from the industry. The events are free and attract farmers from Cheshire and Lancashire, along with Reaseheath agriculture students.



▼ Roger Blowey from the Gloucester Veterinary Consultancy discusses potential causes of variation in pig weight

One subject for discussion has been the concluding comments and findings from The Full Value Pig Project, a research trial currently being run by our Senior Pig Lecturer, Mark Walton. The trial data, which has been analysed by pharmaceutical company Elanco, is looking at the external pressures which can affect pig growth and performance from birth to slaughter.

Reaseheath helps Nestlé Pakistan to bridge skills gap

Reaseheath's international business department is continuing to work with global dairy giant Nestlé in rolling out life changing skills to dairy farmers in Pakistan.

We have trained 20 dairy advisors in modern dairy practices for Nestlé Pakistan in less than two years. On their return home the advisors, who are mainly vets, share their knowledge with trainers and field staff within Nestlé's advisory service and from there it is disseminated to the 190,000 farms which daily supply milk to the company.

Nestlé Pakistan takes a key role in the country's dairy development and is keen to bring new knowledge into the sector, both to build a better future for farmers and to improve the rural economy.

Bill Stevenson, Head of Milk Collection and Dairy



▶ Nestlé Pakistan's Bill McDonald and Reaseheath farm manager Mark Yeardsley with delegates during an on-farm session

Development at Nestlé Pakistan explained: "We believe that Pakistan will grow very fast as a milk supplier and it has great potential for development into a leading milk exporter.

"We hope that we can help our farmers to turn their herds into profit making ventures by improving farm management, efficiency and dairy animal welfare. The training offered through Reaseheath has been very effective in helping us towards this goal."

International training co-ordinator Khalid Mahmood commented: "The training has provided an excellent opportunity for Pakistani dairy professionals to learn from the mature UK dairy sector. Pakistan has the potential to seriously increase its milk production if just a few UK good practices can be adopted into local conditions."

See: www.reaseheath.ac.uk/businesses/international-training/

Chinese visit leads to closer partnerships



▶ The Chinese delegation join Reaseheath heads of departments during their fact finding visit

We are hoping to forge closer partnerships with similar training institutions in China following an international exchange by Chinese educationalists.

Delegates from China spent a week with us as part of a government backed training programme looking at best practice within the field of vocational education.

The visit concluded with the signing of Memorandi of Understanding to set up collaborative partnerships between Reaseheath and two vocational colleges located in the north west of China.

It is hoped that the collaboration will lead to an exchange of knowledge between the two countries, particularly in the teaching areas of horticulture, agriculture, food technology, engineering and animal husbandry.

Yang Guiquan, Deputy Director of Xinjiang Agricultural Vocational Technical College said: "After a week attending lectures and looking at training programmes, we have a clearer picture of how agriculture and food production education is offered in the UK.

"We were very impressed with the combination of theoretical and practical teaching offered by Reaseheath. We also admired the way the college develops its staff and with its strong engagement with industry. We have lots of ideas to take home."

Industry links benefit engineering apprentices

Reaseheath Engineering continues to be the preferred training provider for many leading companies including JCB, A-Plant, CSkills, Case IH, New Holland, CLAAS UK and Finning CAT.

We are supported by our partners, ensuring that the most technologically advanced machinery and equipment are available onsite for the apprentices.

We have over 300 apprentices following agricultural engineering and construction plant engineering programmes. Typically they attend college on block release over three years and spend the rest of their time working for their dealership.

CLAAS UK's Training Academy Manager, Brian Wain, said: "This training programme has developed year on year and has a very successful rate of achievement. It gives our apprentices technical credibility and product experience."

Our motor vehicle department also works



▶ CLAAS UK agricultural engineering apprentices with the latest top-of-the-range forage harvester

closely with dealerships and independent garages and offers apprenticeships in light vehicle maintenance and repair.

Further details: Engineering: 01270 613269
Email clairew@reaseheath.ac.uk
Motor vehicle: 01270 613189 Email apprenticeships@reaseheath.ac.uk

Staff with star appeal

The unsung heroes of Reaseheath have been honoured for their outstanding contribution to our college's success.

Teams and individual members of staff recognised to have 'gone the extra mile' have received Awards of Excellence. The awards are handed over annually in recognition of the highest levels of professionalism, commitment and dedication. All nominations come from colleagues and we have 500 staff.

The 'stars' of 2012 are:

Innovation Award: Foundation tutor Lisa Brewitt

Lisa piloted a programme to help students with learning difficulties using natural horsemanship and equine assisted learning. This initiative has been so successful (see page 12) that it has been taken up by many of our own staff and also by staff and students from special schools and centres in the region. It has been particularly helpful in raising awareness of non verbal communication.

Education Excellence: Manager at Croft End Riding Centre, Oldham, Lisa Sharp

Lisa's leadership of the team at Croft End, our equestrian outreach centre in Lancashire, provides students with an outstanding experience and prepares them well for a rewarding equestrian career. Through her hard work and professionalism, Lisa and her team have built up an enviable credibility within the industry and currently provide

44 students with a relevant learning experience.

Leader of the Year: Student Services Manager Mark Birkitt

Mark blends together two responsible roles in which he supports and helps our students while continuing to uphold standards of student behaviour. He was chosen for the exceptional way he consistently comes up to the mark in both roles and for setting an exemplary example to his team.

Team of the Year: The Farm Staff

Led by Farm Manager Mark Yearsley, this high performing team manages our high yielding dairy herd, our commercial pig unit and sheep flock and our agricultural crops production.

The team's management of our farm enterprises, which is based on best or innovative practice, has won local, regional and national accolades. It has also significantly enhanced our student experience and commercial income.

Giving Something Back Award: Student Services Co-ordinator Mark Hardy

Mark not only makes sure that our students have a wonderful social life - he actively supports our Students Association in their fundraising for charity. Over the years, Mark has given up his free time to run marathons, organise sporting challenges and lead fundraising campaigns. Thanks to his support, our students raise around £14,000 each year for charities.



Lisa Brewitt



Lisa Sharp



Mark Birkitt



Mark Hardy



The Farm Team

GrassRoots

Staff with star appeal

Colleague of the Year: Human Resources Adviser Tracey Edwards

Tracey received her award for the way she welcomes and helps new colleagues to make the transition into a new role and work environment. She is very supportive, builds great relationships with colleagues and is always polite and approachable. The outstanding way she carries out her job makes a real difference to how well staff settle into their new roles.

Special Achievement Award: Public Services Course Manager and lecturer Greg Houghton

Originally a graduate trainee in our adventure sports department, Greg has taken Reaseheath into a completely new area by creating a course which prepares young people for a career in the Public Services. Greg identified a gap in the market, researched its potential and developed a programme which ensures that prospective students get an experience which is not available elsewhere. As a result, this brand new course launched this September with over 40 applicants.

Special Achievement Award: Sheep Unit Manager Matt Bagley

One of the UK's leading experts on sheep husbandry, Matt has raised the college profile in this area so much that we are emerging as a centre of excellence for sheep.

Due to its outstanding quality, our sheep flock has been awarded the top prize in the Cheshire County Farms Competition for the past two years. Matt himself is recognised nationally and is a committee member of the National Sheep Association and a member of the National Sheep Vets Association.

The use of the sheep flock for practical sessions ensures that all agricultural students get the best possible experience.

People's Award: Horticulture Lecturer Louise Moss

Recognised for going the extra mile to support both students and staff, Louise delivers service of exceptional quality at Ness Gardens, Wirral, one of our horticulture outreach centres. She also led the 2012 RHS Flower Show Tatton Park design and build team. Her positive attitude survived freak storms, torrential rain and flooding and, as a result, the garden was awarded silver gilt and attracted much media coverage (see page 10).

People's Award: Marketing Manager Glyn Ferriday

Glyn's drive, enthusiasm and willingness to seize opportunities is seen as key to the success of our student recruitment.

Under his leadership, the college's marketing team oversees the college stand at educational and rural shows and organises campus events such as the popular Reaseheath Festival, course information events and our Apple Festival.

This year's achievements have included the award of Best Educational Stand at the Royal Welsh Show (see page 11)



Tracey Edwards



Greg Houghton



Matt Bagley



Louise Moss



Glyn Ferriday

Facelift for Santa's float

Father Christmas travelled round Crewe in style thanks to the efforts of our construction students and staff.

Level 3 advanced carpentry and joinery students and their tutors restored a Christmas float belonging to the Rotary Club of Crewe ready for the festive season.

The black and white cottage, with its chimney seat for Father Christmas, has toured homes and shopping centres in Crewe for the past 15 years.

As well as providing a familiar festive attraction, the float is a major fund raiser for the Rotary Club of Crewe and raises around £7,000 each year through public donations. The money goes to local charities and youth organisations.

The restoration work was supported by local affordable housing provider, Wulvern, who work in partnership



The Rotary Club of Crewe's Neil Ford, David Heyes and Jerry Park, Wulvern's Regeneration Officer Jan Melia, tutors David Allman and Dave Gould and Head of Construction Andy Capper join Reaseheath carpentry and joinery students during the refurbishment of the float.

with many organisations to make a real difference to the wider community.

Rotary Club of Crewe President Jerry Park said: "We very much appreciated this professional overhaul by students. Our float has become a tradition in Crewe

and its arrival is eagerly awaited by families. Some of the students will remember it from their own childhood.

"As well as helping to maintain a popular service in Crewe, this project will also help us to continue to raise money for local good causes."

Students help grow Poppy Appeal

Kindhearted students joined forces with the Royal British Legion to help grow this year's Poppy Appeal.

Students Association members collected £2544 by selling poppies at Crewe Railway Station for two weeks before Remembrance Sunday. The students operated a daily 9am - 7pm rota alongside members of the British Legion.

A group of 14 students also went to Heathrow Airport to sell poppies, raising still more for the charity.

Student Services Co-ordinator Mark Hardy explained: "A growing number of Reaseheath students have become interested in recognising the contribution of the armed forces to world peace. They realise that the troops who are serving in the most



Student president Sophie Pegg and Student Association members Ben Lloyd, Ceara McDermott and Imogen Johnson prepare to sell poppies

dangerous hot spots in the world are, in many cases, the same age as themselves.

"We decided that we could really make a difference by helping to increase

poppy sales. Many regular volunteers come from the older age group, so we thought it would be good to bring in fundraisers from a younger generation."

Julie Dove, Royal British Legion's Fundraiser for Cheshire said: "We are delighted to have these young people on board and that they recognise the work the Royal British Legion does to support all who serve, both past and present. They understand that we are looking after the Afghanistan generation as well as those who fought for us in World War II."

- Our 2013 RAG (raising and giving) charity is Broughton House, which provides specialist care for ex-service personnel from all areas of HRM forces and of all ages.

Reaseheath at a glance

- Dairy Champion National Skills Academy for Food and Drink
- Engineering Academy
- 14 years - 19 years
- Training Quality Standard

SUBJECT AREAS:

- Further and Higher Education
- Adventure Sports
- Agriculture
- Animal Management
- Business and IT
- Construction
- Countryside and Conservation
- Engineering
- Entry and Foundation Programme
- Equine
- Floristry
- Horticulture
- Food Technology
- Greenkeeping and Sports Turf
- Motor Vehicle
- Public Services
- Sports Performance and Excellence
- Leisure and Community Studies

ASSOCIATE COLLEGE OF:



TOTAL STUDENTS:

- Further Education (full-time/part-time): 2,500
- Higher Education: 710
- Apprenticeships: 580
- Work-based Learning: 127
- Adult and Community Learning (Autumn Term): 524

ESTATE

- College grounds: 21 hectares
- Owned and rented farm land: 330 hectares
- Land leased to Crewe Alexandra Football Club: 6 hectares

TURNOVER

- Academic year 2012/13: £26.4 million

FACILITIES

- On-site accommodation for 500; five catering outlets; student lounge/bar; learning resource centre; HE study area; sports hall; climbing wall; multi gym; sports pitches (rugby, football, crown green bowling, cricket); commercial nine-hole golf course; indoor riding arena

STAFF

- 635 (including part-time and casual workers)

Further details - please ask for a prospectus

Reaseheath College, Nantwich, Cheshire CW5 6DF

'Hannah's Drive' smashes record

Reaseheath volunteers broke all records to help a seriously ill student. Our students and staff stepped up to the mark in a drive to find bone marrow donors. They were answering a plea from equine student Hannah Roberts, who has a rare form of leukaemia and has undergone her second bone marrow transplant.

Volunteers queued to register and give a sample of saliva. The final total of 276 smashed the record for a college event run by the Anthony Nolan charity, which finds matches for patients in the UK and around the world. The names of potential donors will be added to the charity's register.

The event, aimed at 16-30 year-olds, was named 'Hannah's Drive' after 21 year-old Hannah made a plea from her hospital bed. Three years ago, she was found to be suffering from Myelodysplasia, a form of pre-leukaemia which normally affects people in their 70s.

She has since undergone chemotherapy and an initial bone marrow transplant which failed. After a world-



Fliss and Keir Roberts join Kate Lomas and members of the Students Association during Hannah's Drive

wide search, a second compatible donor was found in Germany.

During her treatment Hannah sent this message to her fellow students:

"As many of you know, I have been ill for quite some time now. I had my first bone marrow transplant, but due to an incompatibility of cells it failed. This meant I needed to find another donor quickly.

"If you get called to donate it's not painful, and you may not be called at all. But if you are asked to donate, you have the chance to be someone's hero."

On hearing about the success of Reaseheath's event, she commented on our Facebook page: "I'd like to say a huge thank you to all that got involved. For every person that signed up, another life can be saved. I'm blown away by the amount of support shown by the students and staff. I really can't say thank you enough."

Hannah was studying for a BSc Degree in Equine Science and looking forward to a career as an equine insurance loss adjuster when

she was diagnosed. Her tutor, Dr Jan Birch, played a key role in organising the campaign.

Hannah's Drive was co-ordinated by Student Welfare Officer Kate Lomas and manned by members of the Students Association.

Said Kate: "I am so proud of every student and staff member who donated. I am also very grateful to the Students Association for being on duty all day and to the Anthony Nolan volunteers who did such a wonderful job."

The Anthony Nolan charity has given thousands of people a chance of life.

Regional donor recruitment manager Jenner MacKay-James said: "This has been a fantastic achievement and is a great credit to the volunteers. We desperately need more wonderful events like Hannah's Drive. Hopefully, we will build on this for the future and hold an annual event at Reaseheath. It will be an incredible legacy to Hannah."

For further details see www.anthonynolan.org/register or call 0303 303 0303

Diary Dates...

Come and see us

January 2013

- 12**
Course Information Event (FE and HE) 10am
- 16**
Church Farm, Wirral
Course Information Event 3pm-6pm
- 16-17**
LAMMA Newark
- 21**
Croft End Riding Centre, Oldham
Course Information Event 5pm-7pm

February 2013

- 9**
Course Information Event (FE only) 10am
- 25**
Croft End Riding Centre, Oldham
Course Information Event 5pm-7pm

March 2013

- 2**
Church Farm, Wirral
Course Information Event 10.30am
- 2-3**
Reaseheath Lambing Weekend

- 9-10**
Reaseheath Lambing Weekend

- 16**
Course Information Event (FE only) 10am

April 2013

- 20**
Course Information Event (HE and FE) 10am
- 22**
Croft End Riding Centre, Oldham
Course Information Event 5pm-7pm
- 24**
Church Farm, Wirral
Course Information Event 3pm-6pm

May 2013

- 12**
Reaseheath Family Festival
- 27**
Warrington Horse Show
- 29-30**
Stafford Show
- 30-2**
Bolesworth Classic Showjumping

June 2013

- 11**
Course Information Event (HE and FE) 6pm
- 14-16**
Cholmondeley Pageant of Power
- 15**
Church Farm, Wirral
Course Information Event 10.30am
- 18-19**
Cheshire Show
- 27**
Reaseheath Awards Ceremony



Students register for Hannah's Drive