

LONGHORN

Cattle Society

LONGHORN CATTLE SOCIETY AGM WEEKEND 4,5 & 6 OCTOBER 2024 WORCESTERSHIRE

This year the Society's AGM weekend will be heading to Worcestershire with two visits to longstanding Society members.

On Saturday 5 October we will be visiting the Witley herd belonging to the Goodman family, and on Sunday we will be visiting the Withybrook herd belonging to the Bytom family. The Longhorns are integral to the success of both farms, but are being used in slightly different ways.

Saturday 5 October, Walsgrove Farm, Witley, WR6 6JJ

Walsgrove Farm extends to a total of 500 acres. In 2004 the Goodman family were milking 180 dairy cows and wanted a change of direction into beef. The first Longhorns arrived in that year and then in 2006 the family ceased milking and Longhorn numbers began to increase with the purchase of 12 heifers from the long-established Stoke herd. Many of the direct descendents of these foundation cows are still in the herd.

All spring calving, the Witley herd calves from February through to May with calves creep fed from the end of September. The kindness of the mid loam soil allows mid-December housing, after the Christmas rush with the poultry has finished.

For ease of management and with a view towards later commercial sales, all steers and heifers chosen not to breed from are disbudded.



Historically all the cattle have been taken through to finishing but with the store trade so strong bunches of stores are sent to Worcester Livestock Market at 20-24 months of age. The ultimate plan is to sell the beef alongside the poultry as the quality of the end product is exceptional. The marbling and flavour are second to none and that coupled with provenance, creates the unique selling point required for marketing at a premium level.

We will have a tour of the cattle out at grass and the opportunity to see the geese and turkeys which occupy the cattle sheds and adjacent paddocks until just before Christmas. Lunch and the AGM will also be held at the farm.

After the AGM and lunch there is an invitation to have a private tour of the magnificent Great Witley Baroque Church, see the weblink overleaf for more details. Booking for this is essential.

Sunday 6 October, Coopers Hill Farm, Alvechurch, B48 7BX

Our Sunday visit will be to the Withybed herd of Longhorns belonging to Adrian Bytom and his son Oliver at Coopers Hill Farm, Alvechurch, Worcestershire.

The farm runs to just over 100 acres of permanent pasture which is grazed by the Longhorns on a rotational basis, as well as being made into hay for winter fodder. The farm was just over 30 acres when purchased by Adrian in the early 1990's and then additional adjacent land was purchased and has had hedges and ponds added to improve the wildlife habitat and help manage water flow during periods of heavy rain. One field is designated a local nature reserve by the Worcestershire Wildlife Trust.

There are a number of diversification enterprises on the farm. An area of the farm adjacent to the Worcester and Birmingham Canal was redeveloped a few years ago to build a marina for narrow boats which has proved highly successful. The farm yard is home to a number of independent small businesses who rent the converted farm buildings and the family run a kiln-dried log business. Adrian also runs a contracting business doing fencing and civil works for the National Trust and other local organisations. Olly also runs a glamping/wedding site which has a number of tipis for hire. This is a new venture which makes good use of 'selling the view'.

When Adrian first started with the Longhorns he was buying barren cows to run on the nature sites he is contracted to graze and manage for the Worcestershire Wildlife Trust and the National Trust. He subsequently bought the bull Blackdown Otis and started breeding the cattle he needed for these sites. Subsequent bulls have included breeding from Carreg and Tetford herd. The cattle move onto these sites in the summer and are brought off again in the winter.

The farm is Pasture for Life certified for both the farm and the butchery and Adrian and Olly finish their Longhorns and sell them through a small 'pop up' shop on the farm, marketing them through word of mouth and social media. A new cattle handling system was recently bought with a grant from DEFRA Farm Equipment and Technology Fund.

After a tour of the farm the family have invited members to stay for a Longhorn Beef barbeque before heading home. There is no charge, but a donation for the Primrose Hospice, Bromsgrove will be collected.



LONGHORN

Cattle Society

ITINERARY - EXACT TIMINGS NEARER THE TIME

FRIDAY 4 OCTOBER

Those members staying tonight to either dine at the hotel or one of the many establishments available in Droitwich. The town centre is a 10 minute walk from the hotel.

SATURDAY 5 OCTOBER

Meet at Walsgrove Farm for a tour of the cattle and poultry enterprises.

AGM and lunch

Visit to Great Witley Baroque Church - booking essential

Dinner at the St Andrews Town Hotel, including a raffle.

SUNDAY 6 OCTOBER

Meet at Coopers Hill Farm for a tour of the cattle and diversification enterprises

Lunch before departing for home.

ST ANDREWS TOWN HOTEL, ST ANDREWS DRIVE, DROITWICH, WR9 8BS

The St Andrews Town Hotel is in a quiet residential area of Droitwich, yet close to the town centre. Have a look at their website below.

Please book your room with Debbie in the Society office. Please call 0345 017 1027 or email secretary@longhorncattlesociety.com with the type of room you would like and the nights you would like to stay.

The hotel booking must be made by Tuesday 3 September please.

The rooms currently available are:

1x small single rooms at £75 per night

9 x standard double rooms at £110 per night (single occupancy) or £130 (double occupancy). Some of the double rooms can also be split into twin rooms if needed.

All the room prices include breakfast.

Useful weblinks

[St Andrews Town Hotel](#) - our base for the weekend

[Visit Droitwich website](#) - links for things to do and the history of the town

[Great Witley Court and Gardens](#) - just up the road from Walsgrove Farm

[Great Witley Baroque Church](#) - we have been invited to have a private tour of the Church after the AGM

EMAIL, SCAN, WHATSAPP OR POST BY TUESDAY 3 SEPTEMBER FOR HOTEL BOOKINGS OR SATURDAY 14 SEPTEMBER FOR NON HOTEL VISITS AND MEALS

Member name.....

Number of members and guests visiting the Witley herd on Saturday 5 October

Number of members and guests for lunch at the Witley herd, **lunch will be £15/head**.....

Number of members and guests visiting Great Witley Baroque Church.....

Number of members and guests for dinner at the St Andrews Town Hotel, if not already staying there.

Dinner will be £40/head.

Number of members and guests visiting the Withybed herd on Sunday 6 October

Number of members and guests for lunch at the Withybed herd (**no charge, donation to charity**).....

Email: secretary@longhorncattlesociety.com. WhatsApp 07884 065959. Phone 0345 017 1027