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Elections and AGM

Once again we have had an excellent response to our call for new Council members. With one of our retiring members not standing for re-election we are pleased to see a total of four nominations for Council. Your vote really does count so please do make use of it! Ballot slips are enclosed and should be returned to the Society office no later than Saturday 5th November.

A reminder—the proposers and seconders of each nominee have been invited to explain why they feel their nominee should be elected to Council. Their reasons are set out within this newsletter. **Council has agreed these rules in respect to elections and no other lobbying should take place.**

Thanks must go to our President, Mrs Pat Quinn, who held a superb Judges' Workshop at the end of September. Master judge, David Lowry, provided an excellent perspective on the points to look for in a beef animal, on how to handle a class, and on the process of judging itself and reason giving. It is of great credit to David, and to Pat and all her helpers—thank you Adrian, Fred and Nina, and also Joshua Brigg who helped select the animals and John Stanley who chaired the day—that the day was of benefit to everyone, from experienced judges to complete novices. We were particularly pleased that there were a few spaces for members to attend the workshop and, as

we hope to run similar workshops in future years, hopefully it will be possible for everyone to learn a little more about the seemingly mysterious process of judging!

We would remind you that the **AGM** is being held on the weekend of 12—13th November at Houghton Hall, King's Lynn, Norfolk. A number of members have already booked to stay at the Knight's Hill Hotel in King' Lynn—please mention the Longhorn Cattle Society to obtain the special rate (telephone: 01553 675566).

There are a number of activities taking place including:

A Photographic competition—photos will be displayed on the Friday evening and members will have the opportunity to judge each category. Members unable to attend the AGM, but still wishing to enter the competition may submit photos (name on the back please!) to the Secretary to arrive by 5th November.

An Auction of Promises will be held on the Saturday evening. We already have some outstanding items promised, but more are required. Please do feel free both to donate and to bid!

We look forward to seeing as many of you as possible there.

Sarah Slade

Dates for Your Diary

Midland Group Dinner
28th October

AGM Weekend 11—13th
November

AGM 12th November

Mid West Group Dinner
20th November

Worcester Spring Sale
22nd April 2006

Production Sale, Taunton
14th October 2006

Who's Who at the Society

Breed Secretary:

Sarah Slade
Southcott Farm
Chawleigh
Chulmleigh
Devon
EX18 7HP
Tel/Fax: 01769 581212
Email: longhorncs@tiscali.co.uk

All society matters except registrations, transfers subscriptions, and accounts

Administrator:

Libby Henson
PO Box 251
Exeter
EX2 8WX
Tel/Fax: 01392 270421

For all registrations, transfers, subscriptions and accounts

THE LONGHORN CATTLE SOCIETY

Election to Council

The following candidates have been nominated for election to the Council of the Longhorn Cattle Society for 2006. Please vote for no more than **THREE** candidates and return to the Society Office to arrive **NO LATER THAN Saturday 5th November 2005.**

FREDDIE DE LISLE

Quenby Herd—Leicestershire

Proposed by: Andrew Nelson

Seconded by: John Stanley

Statement by Freddie de Lisle

I took over Quenby Farm in Leicestershire (1,000 acres) seven years ago from my father. The changes in farming which were being flagged up in the late 1990s and which are now a reality led me to reassess how we used the land. An option was extensive suckler beef. I conducted thorough research over two years to look for the best breed. The meat eating quality, ease of management and efficient grass conversion of the Longhorn convinced me to start a herd. It was also a bonus that Leicestershire is the home of the breed and my family has longstanding connection with Robert Bakewell – he was our tenant and we still own Dishley Grange. I also converted the grassland to organic status as it gave me a high level quality certification.

I now have eighty breeding animals and shall build to 250-300. All my steers are sold at a premium to butchers in the Midlands.

I believe the changes which will be enforced by the agricultural reforms offer the Longhorn breed an historic opportunity to re-establish itself as the premier beef breed in Britain. It has all the qualities needed to succeed in the extensive farming system which will be required in a low or zero subsidy environment. It has been proved to be a favourite amongst top butchers. And they are beautiful to look at.

Statement by Andrew Nelson (Proposer)

I have proposed and John Stanley has seconded Freddie de Lisle to become a Longhorn Council member.

Freddie will add to the commercial farming experience on the Council. He is committed to a large, extensive herd of Longhorns selling to premium butchers in the midlands. As a member of various food and farming groups including the CLA he has shown dogged determination in promoting the Longhorn breed to customers, farmers and politicians wherever he can.

With the current agricultural reforms the future is uncertain, but there is no doubt that native breeds are in the ascendancy; if the Longhorn is to maintain its current rate of growth then people like Freddie de Lisle are needed to drive the breed and the society forward.

Andrew Nelson

PETER GUEST

Colaba Herd—Herefordshire

Proposed by: Geoff Wild

Seconded by: David Lawrence

Statement by Geoff Wild and David Lawrence (Proposer & Seconder):

It gives us great pleasure to nominate Peter Guest to stand for re-election to the Council of the Longhorn Cattle Society.

Peter has a long association with agriculture, being YFC County Chairman for Surrey, which is a position which tests one's responsibility at an early age.

In 1975 he started working for MAFF, which later became DEFRA; he is always willing to give constructive advice on the many problems members encounter with DEFRA.

In 1978 Peter bought his first Longhorns and has been dedicated to the breed since, promoting them as pedigree animals and also promoting their qualities for commercial use and as cross bred suckler animals. He is also a well known judge of Longhorn and other Native breeds of cattle. He was senior cattle steward at the RBST Show and Sale for several years. Following the demise of the event, he is on the steering committee since the formation of the traditional show and sale at Melton Mowbray.

Peter works very enthusiastically for the Mid West Longhorn group, acting as both Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer. For many of us in the South West, we look upon him as our contact with Council which is very important. Above all, his help and encouragement to new members is a great asset to the Society.

At the young age of 59 years, we feel he still has many years on the clock and trust he will be re-elected to Council.

Geoff Wild
David Lawrence

JOHN HEDGES

Wormsley Herd—Buckinghamshire

Proposed by: Charles Cottrell-Dormer

Seconded by: Pat Stanley

Statement by John Hedges:

I manage the farming enterprises on the 2500 acre Wormsley Estate in Buckinghamshire, where we have kept Longhorns since 1991. We are now fully organic and produce lamb, beef and combinable crops on around 1000 acres of farmland.

I have now been on Council for 2 terms during which I have seen the breed move forward in leaps and bounds to become a serious beef breed producing a highly sought after end product.

We now have to ensure that the breed continues its progress in an era of de-coupled subsidy as well as great competition from imported beef and where environmental considerations are of great importance. The Longhorn is well placed on all counts, targeting the quality home bred end of the beef market and having a useful role to play in conservation grazing.

With the rapid increase in membership, it is important for Council to find out what is required of them by breeders, new and old, and in particular to provide help, where needed, to those with a less agricultural background. Along with husbandry issues, premium marketing is now of key importance to profitable beef production and the suitability of the Longhorn breed to this cannot be over-emphasised.

The great qualities of the Longhorn will see it through the most demanding marketing tests and as the numbers of animals increase it is of paramount importance to improve our cattle with selective breeding, while ensuring that we maintain breed standards.

Statement by Charles Cottrell-Dormer and Pat Stanley (Proposer & Seconder):

John Hedges was born in 1952 in Oxfordshire. He attended the University of East Anglia, where he read Biology and then worked for the Medical Research Council at Harwell.

Having enjoyed some shepherding he went to the Berkshire College of Agriculture, which led to him taking up a post as a farm manager in Shropshire.

For the last seventeen years he has been farm manager to the late Sir Paul Getty at Wormsley in Buckinghamshire.

The farm is now organic, with a herd of top Quality Longhorn cows, which John founded and has been instrumental in shaping, plus forty Angus cross and South Devon cows and seven hundred and fifty ewes. He also has experience in direct meat marketing.

We have proposed and seconded John for a further three years on the Longhorn Cattle Council for his excellent all round hands on knowledge of farming, his true commitment to the Society and the Longhorn breed as a whole over the last six years, his level headed thinking and his great integrity.

Please vote for him!

Charles Cottrell-Dormer
Pat Stanley

PHILIP ROBINSON

Bollin Herd—Cheshire

Proposed by: Nicky Lockett

Seconded by: John Stanier

Statement by Phil Robinson:

I was born in Cheshire on my family’s farm and only ever had one ambition, to own my own farm. Sadly, this was never to happen and in 1973 I was appointed the Manager to the Bollin Valley Partnership, which is a countryside management service looking after the Bollin Valley on the urban fringe of Greater Manchester.

In 1998 I saw my first Longhorn herd at Shugborough Park and was so impressed by the breed I felt they would be the ideal grazing animal for a Country Park we had recently commissioned.

The Bollin herd now has over 60 breeding cows. The Longhorn cattle have improved considerably in that time and are now at the crossroads of either remaining a rare breed or taking their place in the commercial market with the other native breeds of this country. I believe our Council needs to give breeders some positive directions on the type of Longhorn cattle they should be breeding. We must retain the best of the old, but take on the challenges of the present. Our breeders are the greatest asset and whether they breed a few cows in the orchard at the back of the house or the high flying herd they must all feel welcome, supported when needed and feel part of the Longhorn cattle’s future.

Ballot Paper

For election to the Council of the Longhorn Cattle Society



**Please vote for no more than 3 (Three) candidates
Ballots must be returned to the Secretary, Southcott Farm,
Chawleigh, Chulmleigh, Devon EX18 7HP no later than
Saturday 5th November 2005**

Freddie de Lisle

Peter Guest

John Hedges

Philip Robinson

Name..... Herd No.

Signed..... Date