



## News from your Nuffield Board

**Our New Director:** Rupert Alers-Hankey has now been working for a number of months as our Director Designate and we are pleased with progress as the transition from Mike to Rupert continues. Rupert is now representing the Trust externally and taking forward all planning for next year. He formally takes the reins on the 1<sup>st</sup> January. So, this year's Conference in Exeter will be Mike's last as Director, but we very much hope Mike will continue to support the charity in a part-time Fund Raising role.

**2023 Groups Meeting:** decision made to hold this year's Annual Groups Meeting by videoconference at 6.30 p.m. on Wednesday 1st November. It is hoped this will encourage more Groups Representatives to attend.

**Increase in applications:** having received the 'biggest ever' number of applications from potential 2024 Scholars, Trustees have decided to lift the 'cap' on the number of scholarships to be awarded. In making their final decision the Selection Committee will balance the number of awards to be made against their order of merit, the number of applications and the Director's assessment of the potential to match scholars to sponsors.

**Conferences:** plans for our bumper post-Covid conference in Exeter are almost complete. 35 scholars are presenting at Exeter including the whole of the 2022 cohort plus scholars from previous years whose scholarships were disrupted by Covid. Two presentation halls will run simultaneously. It promises to be a very special event.

The 2024 conference is in Belfast and an organising committee is now well underway establishing the venue and liaising closely with Rupert to hone plans. The Belfast event is also expected to be another bumper event with two presentation halls as the remaining scholars whose travel plans were disrupted by Covid complete their scholarships.

The 2025 conference will be in Aberdeen with the 2026 conference expected to come back into the centre of England.

**Next-Gen Nuffield Scholarship:** is aimed at young people aged 18-24 as part of our initiative to develop young talent. A Next-Gen pilot, enabled by the Dairy Group, will be run in 2024. Two young people from Northern Ireland will be selected for 30 days of dairy sector study in the UK. After an induction day in London, getting to know Nuffield Farming, with an overview of the UK dairy industry. They will then spend the next month staying on farm with Dairy Group members. They will join the Dairy Group tour to North Wales and visit more than 10 dairy farms, gaining first-hand experience of a variety of farming systems. They will have the opportunity to present at the 2024 Nuffield Farming Annual Conference in Belfast. The pilot has been generously sponsored by the Elizabeth Creek Charitable Trust.

Learning from the Dairy Group experience, the programme will be refined as required for up to 6 young people a year. This will then be rolled out for the other Study groups; Arable, Beef and Sheep, Business, Horticulture, Pig, Poultry and Regenerative Agriculture. The programme will be flexible to meet demand.

**Sustainability:** the Board are considering how we should address the sustainability issues associated with our Global travels. New scholars are required to address the environmental impact during their application and interview. We are considering if and how our impact should be measured, and scholars are required to reduce the impact of their travels where possible.

We are confident that the environmental impact of our scholars' studies far outweighs the impact of their travels and we are considering if and how that might be measured and promoted.

**Friends of Nuffield:** this initiative is progressing more slowly than we would like. We are seeking introductions to senior decision makers in commercial companies who might become new 'Friends'. If you know a CEO, Managing Director, Chair or National Sales & Marketing manager of a commercial company and are willing to help us with an introduction please contact David Gardner who is leading the initiative.

**Financial Slow Down:** Presently, NFST is financially strong with healthy reserves. However, Trustees are concerned that the poor performance of investments during 2022-23, combined with continuing inflation and an annual operating deficit, may continue, or even worsen, and prejudice this satisfactory situation that has been achieved over time. They are watching the situation closely and recognise the fundamental challenge of the next 18 months being that the Trust must demonstrate the ability to raise significant more income or make substantial savings to its operations – or a combination of the two.

**Employed Staff:** Trustees have agreed that, going forwards, as a general rule, Nuffield Farming staff will be employed rather than self-employed.