



MINUTES
OF THE MEETING OF THE SELECTION COMMITTEE
Held 29 September to 1 October 2025
At Saffrey, 71 Queen Victoria Street, London, EC4V 4BE

<u>Present:</u>		Tom Rawson NSch – Chair Jim Baird NSch - Vice Chair Jo Price Christine Snell Diana Allen NSch	<u>Apologies:</u> Nil <u>In attendance:</u> Rupert Alers-Hankey (RAH) Director and Secretary Charlotte Merson (CM) – Programme Delivery Manager Claire Laidler (CL) - Office Manager Nick Green (NG) – for Frank Arden Leadership Interviews only																																										
Item		Topic																																											
1	a.	Welcome and Apologies Chair welcomed the Committee, there were no apologies.																																											
2	a.	Declarations of interest. Selectors had reviewed the list of applicants and there were no conflicts of interest.																																											
3	a.	2026 Nuffield Farming Scholar Interviews – Pre-meeting. RAH outlined the interview and scoring process and went through the interview programme. There were 41 scholar interviews. Selector scores would be collated after each interview by CM. 25 Sponsor representatives, all observing a number of candidates would also be present during the interviews. There would also be a number of Trustees and Regional group representatives observing the interviews. CL registered and confirmed identity of candidates’ and received the sponsor representatives. The following sponsor representatives attended the interviews;																																											
	b.	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Sponsor</th> <th>Representative</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>AHDB</td><td>Izak van Heerden, NSch</td></tr> <tr><td>Arwain DGC</td><td>Dewi Hughes by Teams</td></tr> <tr><td>Three Counties Agricultural Society</td><td>David Smart</td></tr> <tr><td>NFU Mutual Charitable Trust</td><td>Gregor Belcher</td></tr> <tr><td>Central Region Farmers Trust</td><td>Tanya Robbins, NSch</td></tr> <tr><td>McDonald’s UK and Ireland</td><td>Caroline Lewis and Ellie Wotherspoon</td></tr> <tr><td>Richard Lawes Foundation</td><td>Bobby Lawes, by Teams</td></tr> <tr><td>Trehane Trust</td><td>James Trehane and Oli Chedgely NSch</td></tr> <tr><td>The Alan and Anne Beckett Award</td><td>Stephen Watkins NSch and Emily Aitchison NSch</td></tr> <tr><td>MacRobert Trust</td><td>Sarah Mackie, NSch by Teams</td></tr> <tr><td>Elizabeth Creak Charitable Trust</td><td>Paul May</td></tr> <tr><td>Royal Norfolk Agricultural Association</td><td>Mark Nicholas</td></tr> <tr><td>British Egg Marketing Board Trust</td><td>James Corbett, NSch and Jeff Vergerson</td></tr> <tr><td>Yorkshire Agricultural Society</td><td>Allister Nixon</td></tr> <tr><td>Allister and Margaret Miller Charitable Trust</td><td>Lucy Miller</td></tr> <tr><td>Worshipful Company of Farmers with Savills</td><td>Nick Major and Chris Behagg</td></tr> <tr><td>Worshipful Company of Fruiterers</td><td>Sarah Calcutt, NSch</td></tr> <tr><td>East Sussex NFU</td><td>Martin Hole</td></tr> <tr><td>Royal Welsh Agricultural Society</td><td>Nick Davis NSch</td></tr> <tr><td>Thomas Henry Foundation</td><td>Roger Pollen</td></tr> </tbody> </table>		Sponsor	Representative	AHDB	Izak van Heerden, NSch	Arwain DGC	Dewi Hughes by Teams	Three Counties Agricultural Society	David Smart	NFU Mutual Charitable Trust	Gregor Belcher	Central Region Farmers Trust	Tanya Robbins, NSch	McDonald’s UK and Ireland	Caroline Lewis and Ellie Wotherspoon	Richard Lawes Foundation	Bobby Lawes, by Teams	Trehane Trust	James Trehane and Oli Chedgely NSch	The Alan and Anne Beckett Award	Stephen Watkins NSch and Emily Aitchison NSch	MacRobert Trust	Sarah Mackie, NSch by Teams	Elizabeth Creak Charitable Trust	Paul May	Royal Norfolk Agricultural Association	Mark Nicholas	British Egg Marketing Board Trust	James Corbett, NSch and Jeff Vergerson	Yorkshire Agricultural Society	Allister Nixon	Allister and Margaret Miller Charitable Trust	Lucy Miller	Worshipful Company of Farmers with Savills	Nick Major and Chris Behagg	Worshipful Company of Fruiterers	Sarah Calcutt, NSch	East Sussex NFU	Martin Hole	Royal Welsh Agricultural Society	Nick Davis NSch	Thomas Henry Foundation	Roger Pollen
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	c.	The Committee awarded Nuffield Farming scholarships to the following 25 candidates, the list gives sponsor arrangements which were confirmed post meeting;																																											

		Name	Study Topic	Sponsor
		Jacqueline Banks	Not just planting trees: designing silvopasture systems that farmers actually want	Malcolm Isaac Scholarship
		Molly Biddell	Rooted Resistance or Policy Power? Finding the changemakers and reimagining land in a crisis age	East Sussex NFU
		Jennifer Black	Are cooperatives the key to creating a successful UK seaweed aquaculture industry?	Richard Lawes Foundation
		Nicola Bowers	Flexible farrowing and the hyper-prolific sow; is it possible to have it all?	Yorkshire Agricultural Society / AHDB
		Jennifer Collins	Tapping into new revenue streams: physical and cultural river restoration on UK agricultural land	Central Region Farmers Trust
		Vivienne Harris	Building resilience: Can the UK develop regenerative agriculture supply chains at scale?	Food Chain Scholarship
		Callixta Killander	How can Agroecology be Scaled to Provide Resilient Solutions for the UK's Fruit and Veg Farmers?	Elizabeth Creak Charitable Trust
		Ellen Kingston	Agritourism: Linking agriculture, food, environment and tourism for a sustainable future	John Oldacre Foundation
		Mohammad Amir	Killing Sustainability, Straining Welfare: Ecological and Ethical Costs of UK Small Abattoir Decline	CHK Foundation
		Samuel Mooney	Sustainable Use of Poultry Manure - A Global Solution	Thomas Henry Foundation
		Alister Neill	Digging into Emissions: The Potato Conundrum	John Oldacre Foundation
		Jane Oosterhof	Can Net Zero Drive Profitability on UK Beef Farms?	MacRobert Trust
		Samuel Pearman	Handle with Care: Improving Cattle Handling Today for a Better Tomorrow	Dartington Cattle Breeding Trust
		Jade Prince	The missing pillar of functional soils: how biological analysis can inform practical management	Allister and Margaret Miller Charitable Trust
		Alexandra Ritchie	From Isolation to Integration: Boosting Social Wellbeing in Agricultural Communities	Farming Community Network – Len's Light
		Alice Robinson	How can innovative fibre supply chains support the resilience of sustainable food & farming systems?	McDonald's UK and Ireland
		Tudor Roderick	Can low input forage based livestock systems be key to business resilience in a changing climate?	Royal Welsh Agricultural Society supported by the Era Francis Davies bursary
		John Shiels	The male layer chick, unwanted or not? An ethical, financial and food security issue for the UK	British Egg Marketing Board Trust
		Matthew Steel	Green Hydrogen: a new product for UK agriculture to produce and sell?	John Oldacre Foundation
		Toby Tibbenham	Family farms cooperation, integration, diversification can it work?	Royal Norfolk Agricultural Association
		Joe Vernon	From gut feel to data smart: Artificial Intelligence tools for dairy farmers	Trehane Trust
		Elizabeth Warner	Cultivating Capital: The Farmers role in growing a Natural Capital Economy	AHDB / Three Counties Agricultural Society
		Alice Willett Green	New Roots: Designing and Delivering Effective Non-family Succession Pathways	Worshipful Company of Farmers with Savills
		Karen Wonnacott	Earning a seat at the farm table: building trust and bridging generational gaps	NFU Mutual Charitable Trust
		Nicola Yoxall	Designing Climate-Adapted Livestock Systems: Managing for a Future of Extremes	McDonald's UK and Ireland
4	a.	Frank Arden Leadership Award Interviews The Selection Committee, with Nick Green NSch representing the Farmers Club Charitable Trust, held two interviews for the Frank Arden Leadership Award. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wed 1 Oct 2025 – Lucy MacLennan and Sarah Hughes The winner is embargoed and will be announced on 19 November 2025 during the 2025 Nuffield Farming Conference Awards ceremony.		
5	a.	The Bullock Award for Innovation The Bullock Award interviews took place on Tuesday 30 Sept 2025 at Saffrey. The panel led by Stephen Fell with Maryl Ward, and Andrew Meredith, Farmers Weekly editor with Trustee David Rose as an observer. Those shortlisted for interview were Neil MacDonald, Kate Speke-Adams and Gordon Whiteford. The		

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6	a.	Any Other Business. Nil	

RAH