

GridLine

Newsletter for National Grid Transco electricity grantors

Spring 2005

Moor the merrier as track upgraded

NATIONAL Grid Transco has worked in partnership with English Nature to open up and improve access to Goss Moor National Nature Reserve in Cornwall.

The company has spent £60,000 on the improvement project, making the track suitable for all forms of transport and linking it into existing public footpaths from local parishes.

It also helped open up a new bridleway — it's hoped this will encourage local riders to take advantage of the environmentally rich oasis.

The moor is one of the country's most important reserves, home to the endangered marsh fritillary butterfly and an outstanding range of rare plants and animals, many established because of the site's tin mining history.

The project to re-surface the badly damaged track originally laid in the 1960s involved bringing in stone from the local quarry at Goonvean.

The upgrade formed part of NGT's two-year 400kV overhead line refurbishment project running between Indian Queens and Exeter that is due for completion next summer.

English Nature's site manager Martin Davey said: "We are very keen to encourage more local people to visit the site and to value its wildlife and industrial heritage, whether they are on foot, bicycle or horseback.

"As this trackway extends for a distance of over two kilometres along the southern edge of the moor, the upgrading of this route is central to our visitor access plans for the site. We welcome National Grid Transco's important contribution to the project."



Left to right: rural issues and opportunities project officer Ray Perrins, wayleave warden Jane Bishop, and Mid Cornwall Moors LIFE project manager Daniel Bloomfield.

● Inset: the marsh fritillary butterfly (PAUL STERRY/NPL)

Contacts

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Wayleave payments

▼ For information on wayleave payments telephone the payments helpline on **0800 389 5113**.

Emergencies

▼ Emergency calls to report pylon damage to National Grid Transco can be made on **0800 404090**. Make a note of the tower's number — found just below the property plate — to help crews locate it.

Electric and magnetic fields

▼ For information on electric and magnetic fields, ring the EMF information line **08457 023270** (local call rate).

Skelton's award is 'icing on the cake'

SKELTON Grange environment centre — one of a number of environmental education centres supported by NGT — has landed a top award for sustainability and landscape design.

The centre's new environmental and community building won this year's Leeds Architecture Award — Excellence in Place and Spaces, in recognition of good contemporary design in the built environment in Leeds.

The development of the £600,000 state-of-the-art building was kickstarted by National Grid Transco funding. The project later attracted financial support from the Big Lottery, Biffaward, Green

Leeds, WREN and Yorkshire Water.

Skelton Grange is managed by BTCV, an international volunteering organisation providing a bridge between global environmental ideas and local reality. It is also supported by Leeds City Council.

The new building, which was opened in September 2003 by naturalist and BTVC vice-president David Bellamy, is at the forefront of environmental design and includes a wide range of environmentally-friendly features such as electricity generation by wind turbine and solar panels, and rainwater recycling. It was designed by local Queen's Award winning architects LEDA



who are committed to creating buildings with a low impact on the environment.

The centre — which gained Eco-centre status in 2002 — has been managed by BTCV on land next to NGT's substation

Show set to kick off in Devon

OUR annual tour round the country gets under way in May at the Devon County Show in Exeter, the biggest event in the county's calendar.

The three-day show is a giant shop window for rural Devon, linking consumers with farmers, food producers and others working the countryside economy.

We'll be there to offer hospitality to electricity and gas grantors, and tell them about future projects in their area.

Over the following months, we'll clock up thousands of miles on the road during this year's agricultural relations programme that will take us as far north as Edinburgh.

"We look forward to welcoming thousands of grantors and guests for lunch at the various shows," said Alan Naylor, field wayleave manager.

"This is the first year that we have invited electricity and gas grantors together and we hope that displays highlighting future projects in their areas will stimulate discussion.

"We also hope that many more grantors will join us for free refreshments and a chat at our hospitality facility". All they have to do is wear their Grantors Club badge. If you are not yet a member of NGT's Grantors Club, ask for an application form when you visit the stand."

*Not available between 12-2.30pm.

Come and meet us at:

- Devon County Show, Exeter **May 19-21**
- South of England Show, Ardingly, West Sussex **June 9-11**
- East of England Show, Peterborough **June 17-19**
- Lincolnshire Show, Lincoln **June 22 and 23**
- Royal Highland Show, Edinburgh **June 23-26**
- Great Yorkshire Show, Harrogate **July 12-14**
- New Forest Show, Brockenhurst, Hampshire **July 26-28**
- Royal Lancashire Show, Ribchester **July 26-28**
- United Counties Show, Carmarthen **August 10 and 11**
- Pembrokeshire Show, Haverfordwest **August 16-18**
- Dorset Show, Dorchester **September 3 and 4**
- National Ploughing Championships, Cambridgeshire **October 8 and 9**

It's a great learning environment

since 1993. For more than 10 years, it operated from a Portakabin classroom.

The Skelton team has welcomed more than 50,000 visitors from the Leeds community for environmental education, training or work experience.

Project managers Caroline Crossley and Lucy Wheeler, said: "We have been really

fortunate in the support and enthusiasm we have had from all the visitors and volunteers involved in the project, so we are pleased to be able to offer them a fantastic new centre to spend time in learning about and contributing to the environment. The award is the icing on the cake for us!"

NGT's external relations manager Ross Hayman said:

"The Skelton Grange centre is a wonderful building and thoroughly deserves the award.

"It provides a great learning environment for visitors and has allowed the centre team to go from strength to strength."

● Visit www.skeltongrange.org.uk for more information about the centre.



LEFT: Skelton's National Grid placement Julie Howarth Pulleyn working with, from left, Katie Brown, Kyle Valentine, Ben Enoch Clarkson and Laura Gledhill

ABOVE: Julie hunts bugs with Kyle

Tsunami aid tops £650,000

NATIONAL Grid Transco's Asian Tsunami emergency appeal raised almost £670,000 — more than \$1.2 million — in employee donations and double matched contributions from the company.

Thousands of generous employees across the group's operations dug deep into their pockets to help the disaster victims. The average donation was more than £80, but one generous UK employee sent in a cheque for £9,000.

In view of the scale of the disaster and in response to the generosity of employees, NGT decided to double its matching contribution — for every pound or dollar donated by employees, the company donated £2 or \$2 respectively.

Maeve Chappell, head of communications and social policy, said: "The disaster has clearly touched people's hearts. The generosity of our employees has been overwhelming, and that single donation was utterly breathtaking."



Naturalist David Bellamy and the Skelton Grange crew at the opening of the new building

Brian gets a buzz out of his life in the city

Although the vast majority of wayleave work is conducted in the countryside, the life of a wayleave officer doesn't always involve tramping across muddy fields or farmyards to meet up with rural grantors.

Sometimes it means donning a smart suit for a high-powered meeting in London's West End, or reassuring town dwellers concerned about the possible impact of major NGT civil engineering or maintenance projects quite literally on their doorstep.

South East wayleave officer Brian Mead's work "patch" is London's busy commercial and residential areas where the challenges are very different from those of his rural colleagues...

WHETHER they work in the urban or rural environment, versatility, patience and empathy are among the most essential skills needed by wayleave officers.

No two days are ever the same, the people they deal with come from all walks of life — and not all of them are happy to see a wayleave officer, says Brian.

"Working in the urban situation, when we are dealing with residential and business communities, means more commercial loss claims to consider, traffic management problems and parking restrictions to overcome — not to mention New Road and Street Works Act issues that require close liaison with local utilities, local authorities and highways authorities."

But it's what gives him a real buzz — despite the unenviable pressures of battling traffic and weather conditions to get into, out of and around London!

Brian has worked in the electricity supply industry for 35 years — he joined the drawing office of Eastern Electricity's North Met and Essex Group in Brentwood in 1970. He was lured into wayleaves in 1984, joining National Grid in 1990 to undertake rural and urban wayleaves in Essex and North London.

Today, Brian, fellow wayleave officer Paul Sage and warden Phil Burgess — assisted by Dave Dewell filling in for Alison Williams who is on maternity leave — cover an area from Northampton to the south coast. Brian deals mainly with underground cable projects in the London area.

He has been involved in the Kentish Town Tunnel, the 2.4

kilometre Dartford 400kV cable tunnel, which is on target for completion this summer, and the new 10km Croydon Tunnel programmed to start in 2006.

But much of his work in recent years has been associated with one of NGT's biggest projects, the £200 million London Connection scheme to reinforce electricity supplies to the capital.

This has involved the construction of a 20km tunnel running from Elstree in Hertfordshire to St John's Wood in north London. The three-metre diameter tunnel runs at an average depth of 27 metres and two new substations have been built at the existing NGT sites at Elstree and St John's Wood.

Brian's job was to negotiate easements. "Although the tunnel runs nearly 100 feet below any property, we still had to negotiate with the owners — we don't have to do this if it runs underneath a road.

"Basically, if I hadn't agreed the easements, the tunnel would not have happened! That's why wayleaves was involved from day one when the route of the tunnel was first discussed."

An enormous number of factors are taken into account when considering a route, including environmental assessments. NGT tries to minimise crossing under residential land and always opts for under a road where possible.

"Once the route is decided, we seek easements, meet planners, local authority councillors, and the community relations team gets involved, organising meetings, exhibitions and leaflets during a major



Wayleave officer Brian Mead, left, with Ted Eason-Thomas, house manager at Regent's Court, a block of executive flats situated just yards from the St John's Wood substation

public consultation process.

"All easements are negotiated on a one-to-one basis. Even though the London Connection tunnel is 20km long, only 13 separate easements had to be agreed because we largely followed the route of the A5 road. And only one of the 13 was for a residential property. There was one farm, the others were mainly commercial properties."

The physical situation of the new St John's Wood substation highlights why Brian has maintained a committed and on-going relationship with local communities.

The substation has been constructed just yards from a block of expensive executive flats. The prestigious offices of an international oil company are close by, as are a big hotel and an old people's home. He built

up a good working relationship with property representatives, including the house manager of the flats, and the facilities manager at the oil company offices.

"This enabled me to keep them in touch with developments and to warn them, for example, of possible and unavoidable construction noise."

Brian also liaises with home owners and businesses affected by essential routine maintenance of underground cables in North London. "The more information we give, the better it is — no news is definitely bad news!

"It's not easy for householders if their road is closed — they could have a large excavation in the road outside their property for a long period of time. Then I knock on

every single door to make sure they understand what is happening. There may be problems with access, getting rubbish collected, parking restrictions — or even getting a removal van to the house if they happen to be moving. Businesses may worry about deliveries, or loss of custom.

"We occasionally have to deal with awkward — and even abusive — people at times. But many are supportive and interested. And it's great when we get nice letters from the public praising the way we have carried out the work.

"When people call me out-of-hours to talk over problems relating to a particular project, it probably means we have a good working relationship, and they feel comfortable about calling me. Which means I got it right!"

"The experience of the wayleave officers when meeting with the local council and the public was invaluable from the start for the new St John's Wood substation and the London connection project generally... their on-going relationship with the general public, dealing sympathetically with any complaints, has been vital."

Stephen Bason
Project engineer for the new St John's Wood 400kV substation

Moorland makes a return, thanks to 'a lot of hard work'

RACHEL HALLOS has always felt close to nature.

"I come from a farming family and can well remember as a child lying in the heather listening to the skylarks and peewits or seeing grouse as I rode my pony across the moor," she said. "Those are the sort of memories I want MY two children to have."

But heather moorlands — important wildlife habitats and distinctive components of the landscape — have declined in recent years.

Which is why NGC grantors Rachel and her husband Stephen, Yorkshire Water

"We have been in a unique position to make a difference. That's the reward."

tenants at Beeston Hall and Baitings hill farms* at Ripponden, Halifax, are determined to do their bit by rejuvenating the heathland on their land to protect it for future generations.

Stephen and his family previously ran the farms as dairy producers/retailers. When he and Rachel took on the tenancies and business in 2000, they needed to look at other avenues of income. The couple joined forces with

English Nature, the RSPB, Defra and Yorkshire Water in 2002 on an ambitious 10-year project to see the regeneration of heather and dwarf shrub on Soyland Moor, part of their land and a SSSI and Special Area of Conservation (SAC), which had suffered the rigours of intensive farming in the past.

"With the Countryside Stewardship agreement now being 50 per cent of our income, it was a godsend that English Nature knocked on our door about the heather regeneration!" said Rachel.

It has meant a major change to life at the farm, because Stephen and Rachel, have had to adapt their farming practice to enable them to manage Soyland Moor. They sold their dairy herd, restocked with beef cattle and brought in Scottish blackface sheep as their main breeding sheep on the moor because they are hardy and able to withstand difficult weather conditions.

"We chose Saler cattle for the same reason — they too can cope with the harsh conditions on moorland," said Rachel. "They originate from the Auvergne region of France, a region which has a rough and very variable climate. We started with one in 2002 and have built up a herd of 89."

Their efforts have been backed by Countryside Stewardship grants and additional funding from English Nature allowed them to erect a



Magic of the moorland... Rachel wants her childhood memories to live again for her own children

6,400 metre fence to keep the cattle and some sheep on the moor during May, June and July. They are then removed to pasture so the heather can flower, seed and have a chance to rejuvenate.

"The cows eat the long moor grass, but leave the young shoots of the dwarf shrubs alone, so hopefully in time the shrubs will re-establish and spread. When we started, there was probably only five per cent of heather on the moor — the aim is to get that up to 40 per cent in five years," said Rachel.

"The heather regeneration

project has involved a lot of hard work — but we have been in a unique position to make a difference. That's the reward."

English Nature conservation officer Paul Duncan said: "The work on Soyland Moor has presented a fantastic opportunity not only to improve the moorland for breeding birds such as golden plover and curlew, but also to enhance the blanket bog which is an internationally important habitat."

* Baitings Farm is crossed by the Eggborough-Padiham 400kV overhead line.



Two of the Saler cattle brought in because they can cope with harsh moorland conditions

Did you know?

- There have been considerable losses of heather moorland in recent times. For example, 27 per cent is estimated to have been lost in England and Wales between 1947 and 1980.
- On the Berwyn mountains in north-east Wales, there was a 44 per cent decline in the extent of heather-dominated vegetation between 1946 and 1984.
- It has been estimated that 440,000ha of land in the uplands in England and Wales have less than 25 per cent cover of heather. There is likely to be further significant loss to acid grassland if current grazing levels and pressures continue.
- Upland heathland is an important habitat for a number of species, including black and red grouse, merlin, hen harrier, crane-fly, certain moths and juniper. (Source: www.ukbap.org.uk)

THERE has been a Brockholes Farm at Branton, near Doncaster, for almost 250 years — but how things have changed since 1759!

The first owner could never have envisaged that one day Brockholes would be home to a fabulous collection of animals, from chipmunks and

coatis to llamas and lovebirds, raccoons and rheas — and even zebras.

The farm is a 21st century diversification success story, thanks to the imagination, vision and energy of its owners, NGT grantors Jill and Mark Humphries...

It's tough going — but well worth it in the end

DIVERSIFICATION can be extremely rewarding — but it's never the easy option, says Jill.

"It may look like an attractive proposition on paper, but in fact diversification can be much more intensive than farming.

"And if it means working with lots of other people, not every farmer finds it easy to adapt when they have been used to working largely on their own," she said.

Jill and Mark's enterprise at Brockholes is three-fold. There is a visitor centre, which is open every day except Christmas, the largest riding centre in the North of England, and an animal care training centre where students can learn skills, from horse care and wildlife management, to gamekeeping and dog-grooming.

Jill's grandmother farmed Brockholes during World War II when it was a pig farm. Phillip Turner, Jill's late father, switched over to dairy farming when he took over with his brothers and Jill grew up on the farm. Encouraged by her late mother, a keen horsewoman, she first took to the saddle

On the network

Brockholes Farm is a member of the National Farm Attractions Network, a national organisation providing expertise and assistance in the formation of both farm and rural diversification enterprises.

It successfully represents members' interests and offers guidance and information on important issues such as legal and insurance; planning legislation and business rates; accountancy and taxation; health and safety; marketing, promotion and publicity; grant aid and animal welfare.

For further information visit www.farmattractions.net or contact NFAN at Victoria House, 31-33 Victoria Street, Kettering, Northamptonshire, NN16 0BU. Tel: 01536 513397; fax: 01536 415095 or email: info@farmattractions.net

when she was just three. By her teens, she was a successful county show jumper who competed all over the country. She also qualified as a riding instructor and horse trainer.

A career in show jumping beckoned — "But reality set in!" said Jill. "Show jumping eats money and getting sponsorship is not easy. So instead, when I was about 25, I started a riding school with three ponies and two horses. It really took off. Within 12 months I had about 30 mounts and today, we have 80 riding ponies and horses, with another 70 we are bringing on for the future. We also have a riding centre at Stockwood Park in Luton.

"The visitor centre also had very humble beginnings — literally two pigs in a pen!" she said. That also grew beyond her wildest dreams. Today, there's something for visitors of every generation who can see 30 different species of animals, enjoy a woodland walk, picnics or visit the Barn café for mostly locally produced fare.

Jill's entrepreneurial skills have been complemented by Mark, a former professional trumpet player and trombonist who once played with the Syd Lawrence Orchestra. The couple have been married for 10 years, and have a young son and daughter.

"We work very well as a team," she said. "Mark is the ideas man, and I have the background in animals."

The visitor centre really took off as a result of a crisis in the farming community. Jill's true love in life is Limousin cattle, the sturdy golden-red cattle from France. She's a national judge for the British Limousin Cattle Society and once had a herd of 50 at Brockholes. "Once a good Limousin could fetch £1,000 for meat when their breeding cycles were over but with BSE and the over-30 months scheme, the price dropped to £180. It nearly bankrupted us, particularly as crop prices were dropping and costs rising. We eventually sold off the bulk of the pedigree herd, and ploughed the proceeds into the visitor centre, and bought a 100-



Jill and Mark Humphries surrounded by their "crop" of animals and birds



acre grassland farm in Limoges in France, with farm buildings we could rent out as holiday lets to give us some additional income.

"When we started bringing in exotic animals to the visitor centre, we had to get a special zoo licence... apparently it was the first granted in Doncaster since bear baiting took place in the town centre!

"We never dreamt the centre would be so successful. In 2003 we had 20,000 visitors. Last year, that had soared to 40,000."

The training centre launched five years

ago has been equally successful. It currently has 120 students in training and runs in partnership with Doncaster College.

It is playing an important role in the community and won the 2004 Doncaster Chamber of Commerce Partnership Award for its efforts in working with different organisations, including the college, the YMCA and over 50 different schools.

Jill and Mark are supported by a strong team of 65 staff and managers, "who make the whole business possible.

"Diversifying has not been easy," said Jill.

"Because of the diversity of our activities, we get 17 health and safety checks every year and there is a mass of red tape to get through. And although 70 per cent of our income is education related, we are still rated as business premises."

So was it worth it? — "Absolutely, although sometimes a quieter life on our farm in France does appeal!"

● To find out more about Brockholes Farm, visit www.brockholesfarm.co.uk. The farm is crossed by NGT's 400kV Thorpe Marsh-Brinsworth overhead line.

Non-farming ventures help bring in the cash

FARMERS in England made almost £300 million from new ventures such as tourism, sports and recreation last year.

Total income from farming in the UK in 2004 was £3 billion — down 5.4 per cent in current prices on last year — with the amount farmers earned from non-agricultural business reaching record levels.

Defra's Farm Business Survey shows that:

- 48 per cent of full-time farmers have diversified
- average earnings were £5,000 per farm from diversification
- turnover from diversification has risen to £550 million (£425 million in 2002-3)
- 2,200 farmers had turnovers of more than £50,000 from diversified businesses.

The amount of diversification varies across England — 68 per cent of farms in the South East have diversified, compared with 37 per cent in the North. An estimated 62 per cent of farming households supplement their income by diversifying into other activities or through outside work.

Food and Farming Minister Lord Whitty said the fall in income from farming was disappointing, and the reasons included lower market prices for cereals, potatoes, cattle and sheep and a rise in input costs largely resulting from higher world oil prices and movements in the exchange rate.

"But the figures also show that diversification is an increasingly important earner for farmers, and diversification activities are becoming more and more successful," he said.

"The Government remains committed to delivering a sustainable future for the industry. Since October 2000, the Government has awarded more than £34 million in grants through the Rural Enterprise Scheme* to help farmers branch out, gain important extra income and boost the rural economy."

*For more information about the Scheme and grants available for diversification projects, please see www.defra.gov.uk/erdp/schemes/res/default.htm

● We'd like to hear from National Grid Transco electricity grantors who have risen successfully to the challenge of diversification. To share your story with fellow grantors, write to GridLine, Papers Publishing, Stirling House, College Road, Cheltenham, Glos GL53 7HY or e-mail john@paperspublishing.co.uk



Bill Cragg, right, discusses land damage with wayleave wardens Sue Dunham and Lee Durant, at Stoneleigh, Warwickshire

Team seeks to take care of the land

NATIONAL Grid Transco's wayleave team caught up with the latest techniques to look after grantors' land at a training course organised by the Farm Energy Centre.

The course highlighted the implications of contractor land-damage for non-arable land, reinstatement methods, aftercare and costs relating to work undertaken by the company on grantors' land. It also looked at new legislation affecting UK farming.

"National Grid Transco is committed to minimising damage whenever we work on grantors' land to carry out essential maintenance," said Alan Naylor, field wayleave manager. "The training course supported our efforts to keep up with relevant legislation and was a valuable opportunity to discuss the different ways we can protect and reinstate grantors' land."

The main speaker was Lincolnshire sheep farmer Bill Cragg, a Fellow of the Institution of Agricultural Engineers (IAgrE), who

has a wealth of experience, both as a farmer and agricultural engineer for nearly 20 years with East Midlands Electricity.

In his introduction, Bill gave an overview of UK farming and the latest reform of the Common Agricultural Policy — the Single Payment Scheme. This replaces production subsidies and requires farmers to maintain their land in good agricultural condition to protect the environment, the soil, wildlife habitats and landscapes; rights of way must be properly accessible, too.

Clearly, work carried out by NGT may affect this, hence the need for wayleaves staff to know all about the new payment scheme.

Bill also talked about land classification, top soil and plant issues, access to land, environmental impact assessments and conservation.

"Farmers will need all their skills to meet the rules of the Single Payment Scheme," said Bill. "It is good to see that National Grid Transco empathises with this challenge."

Network analyst joins wayleaves

LEE Durant has skipped over the fence to join the electricity side of NGT's business.

He has joined the wayleave team in South Wales, taking over from wayleave warden Sandra Stevens who has retired.

Lee, 26, was previously based in Solihull, working as a network analyst on the NGT project to sell four of its gas distribution networks*.



Lee Durant

After leaving sixth-form college, Lee chose a career in Information Technology — his first job was as an IT support engineer with a medical company.

He changed direction in April 2000 when he joined Transco's Business Planning and Development department, working on the transfer and development of land for telecommunications projects.

"I had planned to return to IT after a while, but I so enjoyed the world of property, that I abandoned that idea and decided to stay! I loved the work, and found real job satisfaction.

"As part of the wayleave team, I really look forward to getting out and about and meeting grantors face-to-face for a change — most of my contact with people previously was at the end of a telephone line. I also look forward to seeing how the electricity side of the business operates."

In his spare time, Lee is an enthusiastic golfer and a keen follower of motor sports.

* The gas networks used to be part of Lattice, the gas company which merged with National Grid in 2002.

Heat is on our native trees

ACCELERATING climate change will determine the fate of the UK treescape, with serious implications for tree species, choice and cultivation.

The south and east, where the largest temperature increases and water shortages are predicted, are likely to be most affected.

The Tree Council, which is supported by National Grid Transco, is one of the organisers of a conference this summer when experts in forest science, horticulture and ecology will consider the issues.

It is hoped that *Trees in a Changing Climate* will result in information and advice to all tree planters about how they can adapt to changing conditions.

Co-organisers include two Tree Council members — the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) and the Forestry Commission through its research agency, Forest Research — as well as the UK Climate Impacts Programme (UKCIP), the body funded by the Department for Environment, Food

and Rural Affairs to help organisations assess how they might be affected by climate change.

UKCIP says the impact of climate change could become increasingly severe as the 21st century progresses. Any mitigating action, such as reducing greenhouse gas emissions, will take decades to work, so some level of climate change is unavoidable. It is likely

Did you know...?

PREDICTIONS about climate change that will affect trees in the UK include:

- warmer, wetter winters
- hotter, drier summers, especially in the south and east
- falling soil moisture levels, but also an higher risk of winter flooding
- a longer plant growing season, already longer by about three weeks since the 1950s.
- threats from new pests and diseases.

that Britain's woodlands, semi-natural ancient woodlands and commercial plantations alike, will be affected. Climate change will also affect heritage trees and landscape parks and gardens.

Dr Chris Prior, head of Horticultural Science at the RHS, said: "Gardeners planting trees now must consider that those trees will be maturing in a very different climate to the one we have now. Once planted, there is little that can be done to protect trees from the probable adverse effect of these changes."

● The conference takes place at the University of Surrey, Guildford, on June 14-15. For further information and a booking form, please visit www.rhs.org.uk/research/index.asp or contact Dr Chris Prior, head of Horticultural Sciences, RHS Wisley, 01483 224234. Cost ranges from £160 full rate (£145 for early registration) to £95 day rate for those arranging their own accommodation (£85 for early registration). The deadline for early registration is April 29.

Longer-lasting tags for saplings

NOW there's a choice of two kinds of hedge tree tag!

The Tree Council has introduced an additional tag, one that will stand up to the weather and be visible longer.

The Tree Council, in partnership with National Grid Transco, introduced free tags last year as part of its Hedge Tree Campaign. The idea is to tag saplings to make them more visible so that anyone cutting hedges knows to avoid them.

The modern practice of flailing hedges every year with mechanical chains means that saplings normally get slashed back, along with the hedge, giving them no chance to grow into trees.

National Grid Transco grantors are encouraged to use the tags as a way of showing their concern for the English countryside.

"We found that the red tags we first issued didn't last very long because they faded rapidly," said The Tree Council's Jon Stokes, director of community projects. "So we decided to introduce new tags — these are blue and longer-lasting."



The material used is Polyart, an environmentally-friendly synthetic paper that has the durability of plastic and is able to stand up to water, weather, grease and chemicals. The tags made from it will last for at least six months.

"Rather than scrap the remaining red tags, we decided to offer both sorts because rapid fading is not a problem if you know when the hedge cutters are going to be at work."

● To obtain free hedge tree tags (while stocks last), contact ??????????, stating the type of tag, red or blue, preferred.

Good local stock

- Of an estimated 1.8 million hedge trees in the UK, nearly one third are over a century old
- Allowing self-seeded saplings to grow ensures future trees come from local stock. It also makes economic sense: nursery-grown trees can cost up to £10 each, plus the expense of planting, maintaining and protecting them.

A little TLC can go a long way



Inspecting a recently-planted tree in East Sussex during one of the regional Tree Warden forums

NURTURE our heritage with a little TLC. That was the message from The Tree Council when it launched its 2005 Trees Love Care (TLC) campaign last month.

The Tree Council — whose Tree Warden Scheme is supported by National Grid Transco — wants everyone who has planted trees in the last five years to return to them before September to give them some TLC — that means Tending, Loosening ties and Clearing grass and weeds.

"Thousands of young trees die each year from lack of a few minutes of TLC," says The Tree Council's campaigns director Kevin Hand. "If we want newly-planted trees to survive and mature, we need to cherish and nurture them."

"At least one in three of all young trees die from lack of care in their first five years. In some planting projects, the loss is over 90 per cent. That's a lot of time, money and effort wasted."

If you check a tree and find it dead, try to work out why before planting a new one. Visit www.treecouncil.org.uk for advice.

● The Tree Council is the UK's lead tree campaigning partnership — an umbrella body for organisations working for trees. It has 7,500 volunteer Tree Wardens conserving local trees and woods in the UK.

Village green gets a facelift

SPRING is busting out all over in the village of Goxhill in North Lincolnshire!

The village's Millennium Green was given a makeover last year by National Grid Transco as part of a tree-planting operation in the area. And with trees in bud and spring flowers burgeoning, people are now seeing the fruits of the labours.

About 50 native trees, 500 shrubs and more than 4,000 bulbs were planted at the Green, a two-acre site developed over the past four years by conservation volunteers from Goxhill Millennium Green Trust.

The Millennium Greens initiative — which is managed by the Countryside Agency — was launched in 1996 to provide areas of public open space close to people's homes.

The Goxhill cause was taken up and a committee formed, led by George and Elma Fisher who have seen the project all the way through, obtaining grants and financial support, and purchasing the land from Trinity House.

Trust chairman Keith Brown, said the Millennium Green began life as a disused and badly overgrown field. "We started by clearing the site and fencing it — then we stepped back and took a deep breath as we planned what to do next.

"Hawthorn was planted along the boundary, a mound was created, pathways made, ponds dug and bridges erected. We tried to create as many different habitats as possible to encourage a wide range of wildlife."

The people involved included 100 children from the primary school who helped plant a wildflower area.

"We were delighted when NGT wayleave officer Mike Rockett offered to include the Green in the company's planting operation," said Keith. "After all the planting work last year, we are now looking forward to reaping the benefits this year. Without NGT, it would have taken us 10 years to get to this stage."

Goxhill was just one of the areas to benefit from the tree planting which resulted from the connection of a new Immingham Combined Heat and Power (CHP) station on Humberside, alongside Conoco's refinery at South Killingholme.



Growing well... Mike Rockett, left, George Turner and Keith Brown check the Goxhill Green

The power station supplies steam and electricity to Conoco's refinery plus steam to the neighbouring Lindsey refinery and electricity to the National Grid.

"The connection involved building about four kilometres of overhead line, and planning permission for this was conditional on undertaking off-site tree planting schemes in the East Halton and Killingholme areas," said Mike.

The planting project was kick-started by NGT grantor George Turner, a mixed farmer at East Halton near Goxhill, who was on the parish council when the application for the new line came up. George, a keen conservationist, saw the opportunity to enhance many areas and worked closely with NGT and North Lincolnshire Council to identify possible planting sites.

"The company has done a really wonderful job — it couldn't have done better," said George. "It didn't just throw a few hundred pounds at the project — it has given us something that so many people

can enjoy, and something that our grandchildren will be able to enjoy in the years to come."

"This tree-planting scheme is one of a number undertaken by NGT in association with major projects over the past few years," said Mike. "While it's not the largest we have done, it has covered a diverse range of locations around the East Halton, Killingholme and Goxhill areas.

"So far we have planted a total of 3.2km of new hedgerow, 2.5km of infill hedgerow, 5,200 square metres of woodland planting and 500 single trees. To ensure that the planting scheme has a high level of success, we undertake plant replacement and weed control of the sites over a five year period following the initial planting.

"While schemes of this nature are born out of planning requirements, I like to think that companies such as NGT are about more than just energy transmission, and that planting schemes like this one help us to be more a part of the communities we come across with our networks."

Such a trial, and that's

AT THE age of 66, one might expect Yorkshire grantor Tony Hirst to take it easy at weekends.

But Tony has other ideas! Three weekends out of four will find him astride his vintage Triumph Tiger Cub motorbike, competing in trials around Lancashire and Yorkshire.

Tony, of Moor Quarry Farm, Upper Greetland, Halifax, has been a keen biker for 45 years. "When I was 21, a friend of mine had a Dot scrambles bike. We used to have fun with it in the local woods and hillside during our lunch hour!" he said. "I caught the biking bug, bought my first

machine, a Francis Barnett trials bike for £40, and started competing soon after."

Born and bred in West Yorkshire, Tony worked in the rag trade all his life, retiring in 2002 as an industrial sewing machine mechanic. He and his wife Irene have lived at Moor Quarry Farm for 22 years — their land is crossed by the Eggborough-Padiham 400kV overhead line.

Tony is a member of Yorkshire Classic Motor Cycle Club and the Red Rose Motorcycle Club, and used to compete in motorcycle trials all over the country. These days he sticks to pre-65 trials in Lancashire and Yorkshire. "The



how Tony likes it...

competitors are generally between the age of 40 and 60 and the bikes are all British and pre-1965," he said. "I get such a tremendous buzz competing — you get to know lots of people and there is great camaraderie at the events."

It's a very physical sport, he says. Trials can last up to four hours, with four laps of ten different sections. "Trials can take place in rocky terrain in disused quarries or in woodlands where there's thick mud and deep leaf mould. At times, you virtually have to carry your bike through two feet of mud.

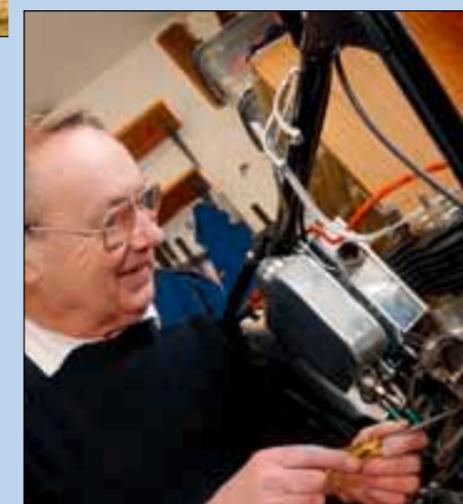
"It's not particularly dangerous — I've

only broken an arm in 45 years of competition. It's not a race. It's a test of skill."

When he's not competing, Tony renovates old Triumph Tiger Cubs and has even built new machines from bits and pieces of scrapped motorcycles. He also helps organise trials every year. "It's good to be able to give something back."

And he's not planning to hang up his biker's boots in the foreseeable future. "I'll carry on as long as my body allows me!"

● If you have any rough land suitable for trials, Tony would like to hear from you. Call him on 01422 373756.



Two views of Tony... taking the rough with the smooth (top) and in the workshop

THE Farm Energy Centre has operated for almost 40 years, working with farmers, utilities — including National Grid Transco — research institutes and manufacturers providing expertise on energy applications and energy efficiency.

Today, it is the UK's leading source of information on energy-based techniques in farming and horticulture.

Many farmers and growers make use of the FEC's varied services. These include: self energy audits; on-site energy audits; lighting fitting sales and design; new energy supply negotiations; agricultural and horticultural publications; climate change management; heating and ventilation design; tariff and contract selection.



The FEC also works with other organisations in the energy business such as the Energy Savings Trust, Action Energy and agricultural/horticultural organisations including the National Farmers Union, the Milk Development Council, and the Horticultural Development Council.

Its database of energy techniques and equipment allows farmers to track down equipment suppliers offering specific equipment, and the FEC Trade Membership scheme helps to bring manufacturers and farmer clients together.

For more detailed information about the FEC, visit www.farmenergy.com

If you would like more information about any of the issues highlighted on these pages, write to FEC Services Ltd, Stoneleigh Park, Kenilworth, Warwickshire CV8 2LS. Tel: 024 7669 6512 or e-mail: info@fecservices.co.uk

Use the same numbers to obtain a list of FEC publications, including technical guides, and technical notes.

Carbon Trust offers sound advice

The Carbon Trust has a broad-based energy advisory service designed to bring farmers closer to the technologies and techniques they need to employ to become more energy efficient.

It was set up by the Government to help reduce the nation's consumption of fossil fuels, through a number of initiatives targeted at businesses.

The centrepiece of its operation is a suite of free and subsidised services — including the Carbon Trust Helpline, publications, and on site-consultancy. To find out more visit www.carbontrust.org.uk or ring 0800 585 794.



Building insulation retains heat in the winter and limits solar heat gain in the summer

Taking control of energy costs reaps big savings

BOTH egg and poultry meat producers have done well in recent years in meeting Climate Change Levy (CCL) discount targets.

An average of 20 per cent has been sliced off energy consumption, thus controlling business costs and reducing carbon emissions.

For the egg producer with a site with 100,000 birds consuming 400,000kWh of energy the 20 per cent represents an energy cost saving of more than £4,000 a year on top of a CCL saving of £1,400.

And for a 200,000 bird broiler

Rein in the pumps

HOW can you save money and boost the efficiency of your greenhouse heating system?

By improving the performance of your heating water circulation pumps, says the FEC's Andrew Kneeshaw.

"In greenhouses, much effort is put into making sure boiler equipment and climate control computers are working at maximum efficiency. But little attention is given to the performance of heating water circulation pumps," he said.

"Although these pumps consume only a fraction of the energy of the heating boilers their running costs mount up."

On most sites pumps are left to run flat out irrespective of heating demand. Often, when the heating system is off the pumps are left running. In this case its worth setting the climate control computer to stop the zone heating pumps once pipe temperatures get to within 10°C of glasshouse temperature.

"One way to lower running costs of the pumps and improve heating system performance is to use variable speed drives," said Andrew.

"These devices use an 'inverter' to provide a variable frequency alternating electrical current which allows the pump speed to be controlled.

"Best performance is achieved by linking speed control to the difference in temperature between flow and return pipes. When heating demand is high and there is a big difference in these temperatures pump output will be at its maximum. As heating demand falls and heat delivery is reduced the pump slows to keep the temperature difference between flow and return the same.

"In a normal heating season savings of 30-50 per cent of the pump running cost can be achieved. This can add up to over £1,000 a year for a 5kW pump."

More FEC tips to save money

FEC project results show the energy savings potential of "refrigerant to water" heat recovery units, ease of integration with existing milk cooling/water heating systems, reliability and the effect on the efficiency of milk cooling systems. Full results available by ordering Technical Note 68 from our downloadable order form and price list on our website.

Don't risk losing money on unnecessary energy costs or inefficient cooling and refrigeration methods. Energy monitoring and auditing has proved that regular maintenance can reap benefits. FEC's *Energy Efficient Cooling & Storage* is a detailed guide on crop storage technology, the principal techniques of refrigeration and their suitability for different crops. You can download a price list and order form from the FEC website.

You could save money on your electricity prices by using the electricity tariff checker in conjunction with NFU Energy Services (now called Associa). Simply call Peter on 02476 696512 who will be able to give you a quick

price check. You will need your electricity supply number found on your bill.

Maintaining electrical safety is often a problem in wet or tough physical environments — like those found on farms. FEC advises farmers to use equipment that has been designed to stand up to the ingress of water and dust or other invasive objects. Make sure that equipment has correct ingress rating and check lighting applications, especially those used in grain and vegetable stores. FEC has details about the latest innovations in lighting and heating to IP standards.

Liquid slurry is a good conductor of electric currents, so spraying devices could become live if slurry comes into contact with overhead lines — with dire consequences for the unsuspecting machine operator. If you have doubts about the safety of slurry application or spraying equipment, contact your electricity company or read the FEC's publication, *Safe Use of Electricity in Farming and Horticulture*.



Check that clearance

ONE of the most common questions from farmers about overhead line systems is how near can they get to them and still be safe.

Albeit that there are some hard and fast rules about clearances, there are so many criteria to consider that to work out a single "catch-all" figure is not possible.

Basic safety clearances are surprisingly small, but when added to other site variables they soon become quite significant.

Things that affect clearances are:

- the voltage of the line — the higher the voltage the greater the clearance required
- whether the clearance is to a fixed structure or if it is to a passing vehicle or piece of machinery
- ground conditions — in fields or tracks that are heavily rutted, allowance needs to be made for the movement of a vehicle
- can a structure or vehicle be stood on, or have a ladder rested against it — clearly an additional allowance must be made for items which can support the weight of a person or a ladder.

If you have a particular clearance you need to check or specify, be safe and contact our helpline so we can give you an accurate clearance figure.



Dirty fans and guards reduce the efficiency of ventilation systems by as much as 60 per cent



Making waves

ELECTRICITY from large-scale wave and tidal generation farms could be flowing into the national grid for the first time within three years thanks to a new £42m scheme announced by the DTI.

The funding will be used to kick-start construction of a number of large-scale demonstration farms that are on the verge of pre-commercial operation.

Support will be made available as both grant and revenue support (additional payments for electricity generated), with funding being drawn from the Government's £50m Marine Research Deployment Fund announced last year. The Renewable Power Association, which represents generators, described the announcement as a milestone in the development of the sector.

site, it means an average saving of around £3,000 with the added bonus of the CCL saving of £1,100.

But to go on improving, says the FEC, the producers need to look even harder at their energy use.

Some of the key issues that egg and poultry meat producers should consider are **ventilation, insulation, lighting, interlocked controls, and air leakage.**

Ventilation is the biggest user of energy in egg and poultry production and can be made more efficient by

improving air-handling systems. Dirty fans and guards can reduce the efficiency of the ventilation system by as much as 60 per cent or 30p per bird per year.

Fans and guards become dirty quite quickly, so cleaning must be a regular scheduled maintenance task. It is one of the most cost effect ways of reducing energy costs.

Many older duct designs restrict airflow — for best efficiency, ducts must have a large cross section and must keep air direction changes to a minimum. And don't forget

building air inlets. These should be at least twice the cross sectional area of fan, so that airflow is not restricted.

Fans themselves vary in efficiency — buyers should take particular care in selecting a fan to obtain the highest efficiency for the job they want doing.

Building insulation helps to retain heat in the winter and limit solar heat gain in the summer. Insulation can be upgraded on a traditional building from the outside by removing the room sheets in section and by filling the roof cavity with a low density

insulation foam or panel.

Lighting — fluorescent lighting is up to five times more efficient than tungsten. Most producers can use compact fluorescent bulbs instead of traditional tungsten bulbs — they use 75-80 per cent less energy and can last much longer.

Interlocked controls — buildings fitted with separate thermostats on the heating and ventilation systems are prone to high running costs. An interlocked controller should be used to link the operation of fans and heaters — this stops the heating system working at the

same time as the ventilation system, except when the fans are running at their pre-set minimum ventilation level.

Air leakage — because of the relatively high temperatures required at brooding, gaps in the structure such as poorly fitted doors and ventilation louvres can add significantly to the heating costs.

Door sealing and draughtproofing are cheap and easy things to do. Temporary sealing using adhesive tape during brooding, around doors, fan outlets and air inlets is also effective in reducing heat loss.



Take aim at the clay pigeon shooting competition by completing the form on this page

PICTURE: PULLI MAGAZINE/BOURNE PUBLISHING GROUP LTD

Aim high for chance to be a shooting star

IT'S shootin' and fishin' time again! Following the success of last year's clay pigeon shooting events and our first angling competition, we invite grantors to apply for places in this year's competitions.

Clay pigeon shooting can

be pure fun, a test of ability, or a competitive challenge — whatever you feel.

You don't have to get a brilliant score to get a terrific amount of satisfaction from it. And the angling competition allows our grantors to get away from it all to enjoy a

peaceful day, communing with nature in the countryside.

"We were delighted by the success of both events last year — feedback showed that we'd hit the right mark!" said Alan Naylor, NGT's field wayleave manager.

"We look forward to welcoming dozens more grantors this year — to win a place in the clay pigeon shooting, just complete the form on the left and fax it to Sue Tyler on 01926 655633 or post it to Sue Tyler, National Grid Transco, NGT House, Warwick Technology Park, Gallows Hill, Warwick CV34 6DA.

"If we are over-subscribed, a ballot will be held to decide who joins us at the shoots and angling events."

All clay pigeon shooting venues will have either leisure facilities or beauty treatment options for partners so this year's applications are invited from grantors and a guest — the guest may shoot if they wish during the morning and then have the leisure options for the afternoon.

Grantors will shoot morning and afternoon.

There will be various regional qualifying events — including May 18 at Stratford-upon-Avon in the Midlands; May 25 at Wetherby in the North East; June 29 at Tewkesbury in the South West and July 7 at Macclesfield in the North West.

Our guests at each event will be divided into groups for safety briefings, tuition and practice to determine if they are in the novice or experienced category before the competition. You don't have to own a gun to compete.

The final will take place in the Midlands in September (date and venue to be confirmed) when there will be a celebration dinner and overnight accommodation for the regional winners.

There will be two angling events — one in the north and another in the south — and they will include a competition for juniors.

Any grantor interested in a day's fly fishing should contact their local wayleave officer or wayleave warden. See contact listings on page 2.

CLAY PIGEON SHOOTING

Full Name:

Guest Name:

Address:

.....Postcode:

Contact Phone Number:

Email address:

Grantor Number (this must be given):

Have you taken part before?: Yes/No

Please tick which clay shoot you would like to attend:

● May 18 (Stratford-upon-Avon)

● May 25 (Wetherby)

Applications for these must be received **ASAP**.

● June 29 (Tewkesbury)

● July 7 (Macclesfield)

Applications for these must be received by June 1.