



# GridLine

Newsletter for National Grid Company grantors

Autumn 2003

## Minister starts tree tag drive

**N**ATURE Conservation Minister Ben Bradshaw has launched a National Grid Transco/Tree Council campaign to protect hedge trees.

The aim is to ensure there is no net loss of hedgerow trees in the UK, helping to meet one of the National Biodiversity Action Plan targets.

Tagging saplings is the first stage of the campaign — making them more visible so that anyone cutting hedges knows to avoid them. The modern practice of flailing hedges every year with mechanical cutters means that saplings normally get trimmed back, along with the hedge, giving them no chance to grow into trees.

And National Grid grantors are being encouraged to help.

“Anyone who wants to get involved simply has to get in touch with our wayleaves team, who will supply the brightly-coloured tags,” said NGT community relations manager Sean Regan.

“Safety is the company’s highest priority and an important part of our maintenance programme is to manage the growth of trees near high-voltage overhead lines, helping to protect the public and the network by maintaining statutory safety clearance,” said Sean. “That, along with our environmental commitment, is why we are delighted to support the hedge tree campaign.”

Tags, and a tagging tips leaflet, are also available from The Tree Council.

The scheme was launched at an Oxfordshire farm. Mr Bradshaw said: “The tagging of hedgerow trees is another practical way for farmers and landowners to show their growing concern for the English countryside. This initiative is a way of helping them to do this.”



*Tagging an ash tree... Nature Conservation Minister Ben Bradshaw, centre, with Tree Council chairman Caroline Davies and Gareth Llewellyn, group head of safety, environment and corporate responsibility for National Grid Transco*

The leaflet emphasises the importance of seeking permission from farmers and landowners before any tree tagging.

“We want volunteers to get in touch with farmers and landowners and offer to help them by tagging hedge tree saplings for them,” said Jon Stokes, the Tree Council’s director of community projects. “The success of this campaign depends on volunteers gaining permission and then tagging safely and responsibly — it

is then up to the farmers and landowners to make sure the hedge-cutter operators leave tagged saplings to grow into mature trees.”

● To obtain free hedge tags (while stocks last) contact our wayleaves team (address on the back page) or The Tree Council, 51 Catherine Place, London SW1E 6DY. E-mail: [hedgetreesmatter@treecouncil.org.uk](mailto:hedgetreesmatter@treecouncil.org.uk). Website: [www.treecouncil.org.uk](http://www.treecouncil.org.uk)



# One-stop 'shop' to handle all wayleaves issues

NATIONAL Grid Transco has established a new department to unite the previous gas and electricity wayleaves departments and the former National Grid Planning and Environment Group.

The Land and Development Group — headed by manager Hector Pearson — now deals

with all rights, access and policy issues over land used for energy transmission and distribution, and with the grantors who have transmission assets on their land.

"This rationalisation gives us an opportunity to identify and share best practice across the country," said Hector. "We

hope this will ensure that the highest possible standards are maintained. Merging the three groups so that all operational land issues fall under one umbrella, will also offer opportunities to improve the quality and consistency of service.

"For our grantors, however, it's business as usual, although

some of our wayleave officers are leaving and others have moved on to new roles. Our grantors are key stakeholders in the company and we hope that they too will benefit from the changes."

The 70-strong Land and Development Group is split into four teams:

## ● Field Wayleaves

incorporates all field wayleave officers, wayleave wardens and administration assistants.

They deal both with gas and electricity wayleaves, and cover 11 "patches" around the country, with one wayleave officer and one wayleave warden in each patch, apart from the North East where there are two wayleave officers

because of the heavy workload.

This team is headed by field wayleaves manager Alan Naylor. Wilson Holmes, Alan Whitmore and Simon Gronow have been promoted to senior field wayleaves officers.

● **Land and Development Policy** is managed by Catherine Lowe, and this team

is concerned with exploring best practice across the country. Former wayleave warden Lucy Hunter (née Williams) has joined this team.

● **Consents and Acquisitions** is headed by Paul Roberts, and his senior specialists are Trevor Beeston, Charles Waite and Steve Knight-Gregson. This team

deals with the acquisition of planning permission and consents for new electricity transmission lines, new gas pipelines and valuation issues.

● **The Wayleaves and Easements Enquiry Team** is managed by Richard Walsh, and it offers the 0800 389 5113 helpline.

## We say farewell to...

AS PART of the reorganisational changes, National Grid Transco has or is about to bid farewell to a number of wayleave staff.

"Together, they represent more than 100 years of experience and service in the world of wayleaves," said Hector Pearson. "Some have served not only National Grid and National Grid Transco, but also the former Central Electricity Generating Board.

"All have worked towards setting the highest of standards and have done much to build constructive and successful relationships with our grantors. We wish them all the very best for the future."

We spoke to some of the leavers...

## Off to a new life Down Under

DAVID Warner, formerly wayleaves head (South), has also left... but he has jetted off Down Under to carve out a new future with his wife Cindy in Christchurch, New Zealand.

Cindy is nursing at the main hospital in Christchurch, while David, 38, pursues plans to buy a livestock farm and set up a land management consultancy.

"We had visited New Zealand a couple of times and really liked it," he said. "When we decided we wanted to buy a farm, we felt New Zealand was the place to do it because of the outdoor lifestyle there. The adventure and challenge involved also appealed."

David — formerly Gloucester-based as Transco's Western area wayleaves officer — joined National Grid in 2000 as group head for the South West Area. He was brought up in Cirencester with a strong farming background — generations before him had farmed in Gloucestershire. After leaving school, he joined the Royal Engineers on a three-year short service commission, serving in the Middle East and Africa as well as the UK.

He completed a three-year degree



David Warner

course in estate management at the Royal Agricultural College in Cirencester in 1989 and moved to Transco after working in private practice for four years.

"I thoroughly enjoyed my time with National Grid, they were interesting years and I learned a great deal," said David.

"Ultimately, Cindy and I would like to set up a farm stay holiday business, so discount will be offered to GridLine readers!"

## "I will miss the people..."

NATIONAL GRID Transco is also bidding farewell to administrator Gill Evans who has worked for more than five years within the wayleave team based firstly at Penwortham near Preston, then at Daines at Carrington, Manchester.

"I have enjoyed working within wayleaves and have learnt a great deal over the years," she said. "My role is moving to the company's offices at Thorpe Park in Leeds, so unfortunately I will not be able to stay on. I will miss the people and the job."



Gill Evans

## Meeting the Queen one of the highlights of a colourful career

WHEN red tape thwarted Percy Claridge's plans to follow a career in the United States, he became a wayleave officer as a "temporary" measure.

"I needed to find a job quickly and when I saw the job advertised in the *Farmers Weekly* and the *East Anglian Daily Times*, I thought that would do nicely until I got some money together," he said.

As it turned out, Percy's "temporary" job lasted for almost three decades — after joining Central Electricity Generating Board's wayleave team during the scorching summer of 1976, he stayed on for over 27 years, finally retiring during this year's scorching summer.

Percy's early years were spent in Sussex before his family moved in 1946, immediately after the war, to what was then British North Borneo — now known as Sabah — where his father worked for the country's post-war Civil Service.

Three years later, the family was living in Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe). Percy grew up there — his father farming at times, either growing tobacco or rearing poultry. When he left school, Percy worked on the land before spending two years at agricultural college. After graduating, he got a job with the Ministry of Agriculture as an agricultural adviser to African farmers that were mainly irrigation settlements.

"I had a lot to do with seed growing because the African farmers used to grow seed lettuce, beans and tomatoes for the European market," said Percy. "For the next nine years I worked as Seeds Officer for the Department of Research and Specialist Services, within the Ministry of Agriculture, implementing the Seed Regulations, and helping to introduce and operate the seed certification scheme."

Percy had planned to take his experience to the USA, and he stopped off in England on his way there to obtain the relevant visa.



Flashback... National Grid wayleave officer Percy Claridge, right, meeting the Queen at the South of England Show, 2002

But red tape held him up — and that's when he spotted the wayleave officer's job in Essex. "Fortunately, my agricultural experience stood me in good stead when I got the job," he said. "As it was such a hot summer, I was probably one of the few people around who could discuss with farmers the effects of high temperatures on wheat yields!"

Percy settled in Colne Engaine in Essex, and until 1991, covered an

increasingly large area that eventually included parts of Essex, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire, Northants, Hertfordshire and Middlesex. On the formation of National Grid, he and his wife Joanna set up home in the village of Bethersden, when he became wayleave officer for Kent Area.

After 27 years, Percy leaves the world of wayleaves with a host of memories. Highlights include meeting the Queen at

the South of England Show as National Grid's representative, and meeting Prince Charles twice in the same capacity.

"Not so good memories include getting lost on a cold and wet February day in 1983 on Graveney Marshes, pre-mobile phone and radio days. It took me until 8.30pm to find a way out!" he said.

Percy says he always enjoyed the challenge of seeing a job to completion, with harmony and minimal interference and damage to grantors' land. "I shall miss the grantors," he said. "It is really important for a wayleave officer to get to know his grantors, and, of course, to be known by them. You need to be the face of National Grid Transco. Grantors always want to know who to contact if they have a query or a problem.

"It's always worked for me. Over the last 21 years I have done all the wayleaves for eight or nine major line refurbishment schemes or other major projects and I am sure that knowing so many of the grantors involved, and having a lifelong involvement in agriculture, helped smooth the way."

In retirement, Percy and Joanna, a company secretary, hope to spend more time at their holiday home in Beauchamp in France's Poitou-Charentes region and they are looking forward to visiting Canada next year for their son's wedding. Percy bought a tractor over 10 years ago to restore — he's hoping that now it will get some attention for the first time!

Percy was a keen horseman in his younger years in Africa and an enthusiastic polo crosse and polo player. Also involved with the organisational side of equestrian activities, when still in Rhodesia, he "invented" the timing system now used all over the world for timing the cross country phase of Horse Trials. As a qualified British Show Jumping Association judge, he is also hoping to have more time to adjudicate at local and major shows.



## We say farewell to... Times when the job has been a hair-raising experience!

**JOHN Griffin** clocked up 46 years in the electricity supply industry before he retired at the end of September.

Now 62, he joined the former North West Electricity Board in 1957 as a 16-year-old junior clerk, based in his home town of Manchester.

Seven years later, he became a wayleave administrator with the Central Electricity Generating Board at Offerton, Stockport.

John found his niche in 1973 when he was appointed wayleave officer. "I was finally able to get out and about," he said. "One of the best things about the job is that every day is different — you never know what's going to happen."

Over the past 30 years, John's "patch" has been mainly the North West and North Wales and he has been involved with a host of major projects. They include the underground cables between Dinorwig Pump Storage and Pentir substation, new overhead lines and diversions of an existing

overhead line to provide a clear route for the Blackburn Southern bypass, and the Isle of Man Interconnector.

He has also enjoyed his involvement with county shows, grantors' golf days and other grantor public relations activities.

"A real pleasure of the job is meeting so many people from all walks of life. I have known a number of grantors and families for a long time. In some cases, I have gone on to deal with their sons or daughters.

"There have been some memorable characters — I remember one tall farmer who tried to lift me off the ground by my hair. I told him I'd tell him about the forthcoming project when he put me down!"

John and his wife Barbara live in Bramhall, Cheshire, and are the proud grandparents of five-year-old Jordan who lives close by with their son Jonathan and his wife Danielle.

A keen golfer for the past 18 years, John is looking forward to having more time to get his handicap down.



John Griffin set fair for more time on the golf course

## Opportunity for a fresh challenge in rural Devon

EARLIER this year, Southern Home Counties wayleave officer **Mike Gleaves** completed 31 years service in the electricity industry — mostly in wayleaves — and he is now looking for a new challenge in south Devon.

Mike, 49, hopes to keep in touch with the farming community and says he will miss his contact with the grantors.

Born in Manchester and brought up in Peterborough, Mike joined the accounts team in the East Midlands Electricity Board's offices in Chesterfield at the age of 18, later moving to another accounts position with the Yorkshire Electricity Board at Wakefield Area. Shortly after his marriage to Beverley in 1978, he joined the wayleave team there.

In 1985, Mike moved south to join the former Central Electricity Generating Board at Bedminster Down near Bristol, transferring to Winchester, Hampshire, in 1991 after the electricity industry's privatisation.

Based in Nursling near Southampton, he had a huge wayleave "patch", covering an area from Chichester in the

east to Indian Queens in Cornwall.

Mike moved to Tunbridge Wells in 1998 to look after wayleaves in Surrey, Sussex and parts of Kent in the south east Area.

A keen golfer, Mike also enjoys travelling, particularly to Switzerland where he would like to live one day. He has two daughters, Sarah, 12, and Rachel, 10.

## Former competition ploughman sets out to cultivate his long-held country interests



Andrew Carpenter and his restored vintage tractor

**ANDREW Carpenter** spent 13 years as a wayleave officer — and enjoyed every minute of them.

"Wayleaves allowed me to meet thousands of people over the years — and work with many great colleagues. I'm certainly going to miss the regular contact with the grantors, many of whom I consider firm friends," he said.

Andrew, 53, took early retirement at the end of August. He is a countryman through and through — his family has run a market garden and nursery business near St Albans for nearly 80 years, and

he was just 13 when he first got behind the wheel of a tractor and plough.

He went on to do well in competitive ploughing and in 1984 won his county championship, earning a place in the national event, although he was unable to attend.

Among his most prized possessions today are a Kverneland reversible plough and a recently acquired restored vintage International Harvester tractor which he shows off at rallies. He is an honorary member of the Kimpton Agricultural Competitions Association in Hertfordshire and

often judges at local shows.

Andrew was delighted when National Grid began its sponsorship of the Society of Ploughmen in the late 1990s.

"It's hard to describe the pleasures of ploughing," he said. "It's just a wonderful feeling to turn the soil and breathe in the smell of the newly-turned earth. It's a sign of a new year, another season and renewal of the land."

After leaving school in 1966, Andrew began working in practical agriculture and studied at Oaklands College in St Albans. He later worked as manager of a farm in

## Ron seeks a new tune in business

HE MAY be hanging up his wayleave wellies soon, but **Ron Hodey** has no intention of letting the grass grow under his feet.

After 33 years in the electricity industry, 23 of them in wayleaves, latterly in the South West and South Midlands, Ron has plenty of plans to keep him busy — including some featuring his beloved tuba!

Ron, 52, played the euphonium in his teens, but gave it up for 30 years until his daughters Michelle and Laura began playing brass instruments. He caught the bug again, bought a tuba and founded Dodington Parish Brass Band in Yate, Gloucestershire, in 1996. Today the band performs at charity events, fetes and other community events.

"Sitting around doing nothing in retirement is not for me," said Ron, a Dodington Parish Councillor. "I'm looking forward to finding more time to improve my tuba playing and I intend to set up a brass musical instrument repair business — it won't make much money, but I hope it will benefit others. Hopefully I will also find some gainful employment, perhaps promoting the benefits of trees or cycling, both interests of mine — I was a cycling proficiency instructor for 17 years."

Wiltshire-born Ron — who also has a married son, James

— lives with his wife Linda in Yate. He joined the former Central Electricity Generating Board, where he met Linda, in 1970 as an administrative trainee, based in Bristol. After 10 years in the South West Region legal liaison and insurance section, he joined Estates and Wayleaves, where, he said, "both job satisfaction and career took off."

"I have always enjoyed the job, particularly meeting grantors and learning about their interests and concerns," said Ron. "Our grantors are very important to the company, and their enthusiasm for their enterprises and diversifications is inspiring. Even in times of difficulty — such as the foot and mouth crisis — they were

still positively finding a way ahead."

Of particular pride to Ron is the fact that he was the first to identify Iver substation in Buckinghamshire as a possible site for an environmental centre that would meet the needs of people with disabilities. Since its humble beginnings in 1990, Iver Nature Study Centre has expanded to become a prime focus for environmental, scientific and energy education, and is now at the forefront of horticultural therapy in the south east. Ron was also involved in the development of National Grid Transco's Bramley Frith environmental education centre near Basingstoke.



Rapt listeners... wayleave officer Ron Hodey captivates an unusual audience while practising for Dodington Parish Band

## Injured rider thanks wellwishers

**JOHN Cunnington** sends his thanks to all North East grantors, land agents and colleagues who sent their good wishes for his recovery from a serious road accident in June.

Wayleaves officer John was badly injured in the accident just a mile from his home in Bubwith in the East Riding of Yorkshire.

He was riding his Suzuki motorcycle when he was involved in a collision with a car; it left him with a broken left foot, broken right leg, two broken arms and heavy bruising. He spent a month in hospital and is now back home.

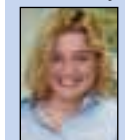
"I have been very touched by the many calls, cards and visits from grantors and land agents," said John. "My thanks to them all for their kindness and thoughtfulness."

When back at work, John will take up a new appointment as a land and development officer with the consents and acquisitions Team.

## Welcome to a new warden

**AMY Jones** has moved over from the Wayleaves Enquiry Centre team to become a wayleave warden in East Anglia, working with wayleave officer Barry Cullimore.

Amy, 23, was brought up in Shropshire and studied at Harper Adams University College in



Amy Jones Newport. She graduated last year with a degree in rural enterprise and land management.

Amy said: "I had done some wayleave work as an assistant land agent with the National Trust during a college placement. I really enjoyed it so I was delighted to get the chance to join National Grid Transco's wayleave team."





From left: James and Rosemary Massey, Idris and Helen Roberts, Rhodri Ap-Gwyn, Janet Clarke



Maurice Cutler, Phil Burgess, Mike Lindsell, Sydney Duffield and Robert Speakman



Geoff Consett, Ali Consett, Zoe Ascroft, Lucy Hunter, Mike Rockett, Peter Jones and Chris Ascroft



Bob Tute, Gordon Boyer, Jackie Boyer and Ron Hodey



Robin Smith, Anthony McKenna, Charlie Waite and Richard Evans

**RIGHT:** shooting with a smile... grantor Jackie Boyer from Withy Farm, and instructor Chris Miles  
**BELOW:** grantor Henry Shilles prepares to shoot, with instructor Peter Johnson and (left) wayleave officer Ron Hodey



# Clay pigeon days hit right target with grantors

DOZENS of grantors showed off their marksmanship in a series of clay pigeon shooting events organised by National Grid.

The seven invitation-only events culminated in a grand final at the NAC at Stoneleigh and a celebration dinner at the Chesford Grange Hotel, Kenilworth, where Hector Pearson, land and development manager, honoured the winners.

Alan Naylor, field wayleaves manager, said: "It's the first time we've arranged clay pigeon shoots but, as it is a sport enjoying ever-increasing popularity, we thought it would be a good opportunity to get grantor enthusiasts together to share a mutual interest."

The qualifying events were staged at Bradford-on-Avon, Wiltshire; Aldermaston in Berkshire; Wetherby in West Yorkshire; Nantwich in Cheshire; Fillongley in Warwickshire; Cheshunt in Hertfordshire; and Caernarfon in North Wales.

The days were designed both for

novice and more experienced shooters, with 15 guests in each event. National Grid invited grantors who in questionnaires had previously indicated their interest in shooting. They were joined by other guests, mainly land agents.

Alan said: "We divided into groups for safety briefings, tuition and practice. After a strictly alcohol-free lunch, there was competition shooting before tea and prize-giving. The days were a fantastic success."

Peter Jones, 55, who has a mixed farm in Gwynedd, won the novice class at the Caernarfon event in North Wales and went on to pick up a trophy in the team flush. "The whole competition was a great experience," he said.

"I had never tried clay pigeon shooting before. Now I have, I will have to keep practising for the next event! We had a really warm welcome, were well looked after and it was good to meet up with other grantors from around the country."

## RESULTS

**THE FINAL: Team flush** — trophies went to Peter Jones, James Massey, Geoffrey Consett and Mike Lindsell. **High gun for the best experienced shot** — Robert Speakman. **Highest new gun** — Idris Roberts. **Highest guest score** — Mrs Zoe Ascroft.

## REGIONAL WINNERS

**(experienced):** Gordon Boyer of Highbridge (Bradford on Avon); Robert Speakman of Braintree (Aldermaston); Mark Alton of Wetherby (Wetherby); James Massey of Macclesfield (Nantwich); Peter Crew of Birmingham (Fillongley); Chris Ascroft of Cambridge (Cheshunt); and Gomer Thomas of Portmadog, Gwynedd (Caernarfon).

## REGIONAL WINNERS (novice):

Jackie Boyer of Highbridge (Bradford on Avon); Andy Barr of Chelmsford (Aldermaston); Maurice Cutler of Stokesley (Wetherby); Idris Roberts of Mold (Nantwich); Robin Smith, Sutton Coldfield (Fillongley); David Prime, Bishops Stortford (Cheshunt); and Peter Jones, Penrhyndeudraeth, Gwynedd (Caernarfon).

## REGIONAL RUNNERS-UP: —

Dick Stainer of Melksham (Bradford on Avon); Mike Lindsell of Great Sampford (Aldermaston); Geoffrey Consett of Thirsk (Wetherby); Edward Massey of Macclesfield (Nantwich); Anthony McKenna, Sutton Coldfield (Fillongley); John Deacon, St Albans (Cheshunt); and Rhodri Davies, Penrhyndeudraeth, Gwynedd (Caernarfon).

## Did you know...?

- Shooting live pigeons released from boxes or traps was a fashionable competitive sport, often involving large sums of money. The competitions were made illegal in 1921.
- At the beginning of the last century, glass balls were substituted for live birds and these in turn were superseded by "clay pigeons" — saucer shaped discs of baked ceramic material, often recycled mineral waste.
- It is governed and regulated by the Clay Pigeon Shooting Association — commonly known as the CPSA.

(Source [www.cpsa.co.uk](http://www.cpsa.co.uk) and [www.basc.org.uk](http://www.basc.org.uk))

For further information about CPSA, e-mail [info@cpsa.co.uk](mailto:info@cpsa.co.uk) or write to CPSA, Edmonton House, Bisley Camp, Brookwood, Woking, Surrey GU24 0NP.

# Programme proves itself over again

NATIONAL Grid Transco took to the road at the end of May as this year's agricultural relations programme swung into action.

It kicked off at the Stafford Show and moved round the country, visiting the South of England Show at Ardingley and the Cheshire, Lincolnshire, Cotswold, Yorkshire, Durham County, Lancashire, and New Forest and Hampshire Shows.

Its tenth and final outing was at the National Ploughing Championships on October 11 and 12 — the company was one of the main sponsors. More than 160 ploughmen were cheered on by 27,000 spectators at Brougham, near Penrith, during two days of competitions. The climax was the selection of John Hill and Simon Whitty to represent England at the 2004 World Ploughing Contest in Northern Ireland.

Alan Naylor, field wayleaves manager, said: "We enjoyed

meeting more than 3,000 grantors and their guests at the different events around the country. We were delighted to receive lots of enthusiastic feedback from our guests."

Among them was arable farmer David Priestner and his wife Janet, from Dunham Massey, Altrincham, who visited the Cheshire Show. David said: "The invitation to the National Grid Transco stand gave us a chance to meet up with our wayleave officer Alan Whitmore." Other happy guests included long-time grantors John and Vi Varrier, from East Brabourne, Ashford, who attended the South of England show. "We had a thoroughly good day," said John.

Alan said: "We would like to have invited more grantors to join us for lunch. However, we were pleased to welcome many of the 3,000 or so members of our exclusive Grantors Club for refreshments and a chat."

## Web wonder

NATIONAL Grid Transco Group has the best website among Britain's top 100 companies. It won the web "Oscar" based on research on home pages carried out for Interactive Bureau, a leading UK web strategy and design firm.

## Info boost

A WEALTH of new information on National Grid Transco's approach to corporate social responsibility has been added to its website ([www.ngtgroup.com](http://www.ngtgroup.com)). The "Responsibility" section now has more than 100 pages, which are packed with information on the Group's social, safety, environmental and occupational health activities and on how it has performed over the last year.

## Channel change

A 530-TONNE transformer at National Grid's substation for the cross-Channel interconnector has been changed after being "floated" out of position.

The converter transformer — one of eight at Sellindge in Kent — developed a fault that couldn't be repaired while it was in place.

Engineering Services moved the twelve-by-six metre transformer and swapped it for a spare. Contractors then used a "water-skate" system in which skates are inserted underneath the transformer and lifted by water pressure.

## Prison plans

THE National Grid Transco Foundation has plans to step up help for young offenders. The much-acclaimed scheme currently trains young offenders at Reading Prison in Berkshire to become groundwork engineers. It will be extended this year to four prisons and train 40 inmates as gas operatives. The foundation's head Dr Mary Harris said that in 2004, the company will be working in partnership with 12 prisons to train up to 100 inmates as operatives for the gas, electricity and water industries.



## Job training scheme picks up business honour

NATIONAL Grid Transco has been honoured in this year's Business in the Community's award scheme for corporate responsibility in the UK.

The company also sponsored the Business in the Environment Award, one of 19 categories in the Business in the Community Awards for Excellence.

The awards, now in their fifth year were developed to encourage companies to measure, continually improve and communicate their positive impact on society. They focus on impact and evidence of results and are open to UK businesses large or small.

National Grid Transco's Jobs Training for Young Offenders was named a national example of excellence in the Healthy Communities Award category. The programme aims to stop young offenders returning to crime by offering them training and employment as gas groundwork engineers.

The company also received a highly commended in the national Neighbourhood Renewal Award for impact on a specific location, rural or urban. It recognised Transco's Affordable Warmth programme which aims to benefit up to one million homes, particularly people in low-income groups.

### Strong culture

The award sponsored by National Grid Transco was won by Shields Environmental, which offers the world's first nationwide mobile phone recycling scheme. This both helps to provide affordable communication in developing countries and also equates to savings of more than 250 tonnes of landfill.

National Grid Transco director of communications Gareth Lloyd said: "We have supported this particular award for several years because the company has a strong culture of environmental responsibility, both in our UK electricity and gas businesses.

"Several of our community investment programmes have an environmental or sustainable development theme — a prime example being the network of environmental education centres at 12 of our electricity substation sites."

The awards were organised in association with the *Financial Times*, sponsored by the Department of Trade and Industry and supported by ScottishPower, Company of the Year 2002.

Business in the Environment director Patrick Mallon said: "The real power of the awards lies in what we all learn from their example. The support of National Grid Transco is invaluable to raise the profile of the BiE Award each year."

Liz and Roger Sutton with current and future milk producers



## Goat's milk is tops – and no butts!

**S**OME people might say it was vision that led to Cheshire grantors Roger and Liz Sutton launching themselves into dairy goat farming.

The couple themselves say it was a gamble that fortunately paid off.

After starting with just five goats in 1985, they now own one of the six largest goat herds in the country and supply milk, goat's cheese, butter, cream and yoghurt, to nearly every major retailer and supermarket chain in the UK.

Different from the days when it was very much "garden gate marketing", said Liz. "I think our children grew up in the back of the car."

Liz and Roger both come from farming backgrounds, and when they married in 1980, Roger was working as a representative, selling animal feedstuffs. In 1982, he began managing a beef unit at a farm in the middle of Cheshire's Delamere Forest.

Three years later, Roger's employer decided to cease beef production so the couple started their own business at the site with five goats. At the time, there was little market for dairy goat products.

Frozen, unpasteurised milk was available, but usually in health food shops or small specialised outlets.

"Roger just had this idea that there

was a real future for goat's milk — so we decided to take the plunge," said Liz. "We started off by making cheese in the farm kitchen and personally delivering it to local customers — which is why my daughter Charlotte and son James spent so much time in the car when they were very young."

The couple persevered as the business gradually expanded. They decided that the constraints of cheese making were not practical, so they joined forces with a local dairy to sell the milk to a local supermarket.

"Soon after that, in 1987/88, we decided to do our own marketing — and very quickly landed our first big customer, ASDA," said Liz.

"Fortunately for us, supermarkets were beginning to look at stocking alternatives to cow's milk to meet customer demand. We were able to meet that demand — so Roger's hunch was correct."

By 1992, the couple had moved their business to a farm on the Tabley estate near Knutsford and started their own dairy processing plant. In 1997, the milk production side moved to Feldy

Lodge Farm\* at Aston by Budworth, Northwich, with farm manager Graham Routledge moving there to run the site.

Graham had previously worked in dairy farming... but very quickly became a goat enthusiast. "They are great animals, friendly, intelligent and great to work with. It would take a lot to get me back to cows."

Last year, the couple moved milk processing to another company, which has the latest technology for packing milk for longer shelf life. Seven other herds in Cheshire supply the processing plant, as do a number of herds in the South West.

Today, the Suttons have about 1,050 goats, mainly British Saanen. About 850 make up the milking herd, and there are also 200 young animals.

The goats are milked twice a day in a state-of-the-art rotary milking parlour, each animal giving an average of three litres — and that makes about 2,550 litres a day... "A bit different from the early days," said Liz.

\* *Feldy Lodge Farm is crossed by the Daines/Deeside 400kV overhead line which is being refurbished this year.*

## Goat notes...

- The goat is believed to be second only to the dog in terms of how long it has been domesticated.

- More people in the world drink goat's milk than cow's milk — and many more people eat goat meat than sheep meat.

- Many babies have been saved by a switch to goat's milk after severe allergic reactions to cow's milk and intolerance to the same type of protein in soya milk formula.

- The Saanen goat originated in Switzerland and was first imported into Britain at the end of the nineteenth century. The early imports were crossed with British breeds and a new type was developed called the British Saanen.

- Goats are browsers and highly selective grazers. They have a reputation for eating all sorts of rubbish... but this is untrue. They are fastidious eaters and if food falls to the ground or is too coarse, mouldy or in anyway imperfect, they will not eat it.

## Dominic takes steps to help youngsters

LAND and development officer Dominic Toft donned his walking boots and helped raise £6,000 to provide equipment for children with hearing difficulties.

Dominic, pictured, is a governor of St Mary's Catholic Primary School in Congleton where his 10-year-old son is a pupil. The money was earmarked for a hearing sound loop to help children at the school.

Dominic joined nine other parents for the 34-mile walk along the Sandstone Trail between Frodsham, near Runcorn in Cheshire, and Whitchurch in Shropshire.

"It took us from 6.30am to 6.30pm — fortunately we enjoyed good weather," he said. "I've never walked that far before — and frankly I



won't be in any hurry to do it again... if ever."

Together the walkers raised £5,000. National Grid topped it up with £1,000, bringing the total to £6,000.

Dominic much prefers pedal power and has often cycled long

distances, including a 140-mile coast-to-coast Sustrans route over three days. He recently cycled from south to north Wales.

- National Grid has been named the top utility when it comes to payroll-giving to charity.

The Charities Aid Foundation reveals that about 19 per cent of National Grid staff donate to charities direct from gross pay, making it the fifth most generous company in the country for this method of tax-efficient donation.

## City scheme worthy of consideration

NATIONAL Grid has been commended by Birmingham City Council for the way it tackled a major upgrade scheme in the area.

The company received a Considerate Contractor Streetworks Scheme award for the Pirelli-managed facility to the Bustleholm to Nechells 275kV underground cable.

It recognised the conduct and quality of work along the A34 between Birmingham and Walsall during late spring 2002. This section of work was also completed two weeks ahead of schedule.

National Grid is refurbishing about six kilometres of underground cable between Bustleholm and Perry Barr substations. The £4 million scheme has

progressed well with much of the work now complete.

Brian Smethurst, project engineer and team leader, said: "Throughout this project, we have made sure that those living and working close by have been kept informed about the works going on around them.

"The patience and co-operation of the local community during the work has been greatly appreciated.

"By working closely with Pirelli, we have ensured that impact from the works themselves has been mitigated where possible. We have also worked hard to maintain the standards recognised by the award to the final stages of the project."



## Power cut down to a combination of factors

A COMBINATION of factors led to the rush-hour London power cut, says National Grid Transco.

These were:

- planned normal summer maintenance work meant that Wimbledon and New Cross and Hurst and Littlebrook were connected by only one circuit
- an alarm indicated a fault at Hurst substation, a transformer was taken out of service and power rerouted into London through other circuits
- within seven seconds another fault occurred, stopping flows on a 275,000-volt underground cable between New Cross and Wimbledon substations. At this point, electricity supplies to the affected areas could not be maintained.

The problem — an incorrect protection relay installed in 2001 when old equipment was replaced — was identified, fixed within half an hour and full power was restored to the transmission system. Fifteen minutes later distribution company EDF Energy re-energised its system.

"Of course, if the two circuits which were being maintained had been in service, there would not have been a power cut," said Nick Winsor, NGT group director of UK and US transmission.

"The maintenance, however, was necessary and the security of the system had been properly planned for, including EDF's pre-planned response in the event of a transformer failure."

The incorrect relay — one amp instead of five — had not been detected during the 2001 commissioning and quality control checks.

"We are inspecting all 43,000 similar types of equipment and also implementing other actions to make sure we learn the lessons from this power cut."

Energy Minister Stephen Timms, who has received a report on the incident from NGT, has launched an investigation into the power cut.

"I am grateful to National Grid for the report on the recent power cuts and the lessons to be learned. However, I have decided in the light of the report that further work needs to be done to look into the wider issues surrounding these power cuts."

# Hole lotta digging going on!

A £200 MILLION scheme to ensure that National Grid can meet increasing demand for electricity in central London is on course for completion by spring 2005.

A key feature of the scheme is a 12½-mile tunnel that will be used to transmit electricity from Elstree, in Hertfordshire, to St John's Wood, in the heart of the capital.

Two new 400kV substations will also be built at National Grid sites in Elstree and St John's Wood.

This has been the largest tunnelling project so far undertaken by National Grid.

Huge machines worked night and day to dig the tunnel, which forms a vital part of the London connection project. It is three metres in diameter and was completed on schedule.

The tunnel will house a 400kV cable — one of the longest of its kind in Europe. It uses the latest cross-linked polyethylene insulation technology.

The tunnel was built to allow for a second 400kV cable

circuit in the future when demand for electricity increases further. On average, it is about 27 metres underground, so most of the work has been invisible and inaudible at ground level. Tunnelling has also meant little traffic disruption.

Jim Street, the project manager, said it was a "tremendous challenge" to build a 12½-mile tunnel and two new substations in complex urban environments with minimal impact, but he added: "We believe we will achieve this."

The substation at Elstree will be housed inside a new building and will form the interconnection between National Grid's transmission system and the new 400kV cable circuit to St John's Wood.

The tunnel head house building was completed this spring and the substation will



Inside part of the tunnel, above, and inset, members of the tunnel team

be finished by early 2005.

The new St John's Wood substation has been designed to fit in with the modern buildings in the surrounding area and it is due for completion by late next year.

Five intermediate tunnel access shafts and head house buildings are being sited along the tunnel route.

These are needed for ventilation and to hold control equipment for the operation of the transmission cables. National Grid consulted with local authorities, residents and businesses to ensure that the buildings blended in with the environment. All five head houses were completed this spring.

Brown & Root (now KBR) has worked with National Grid since 1999 to develop the scheme design. Other contractors involved are Murphy Group, ABB and Siemens Power Transmission and Distribution.

For more information, log on to [www.thelondonconnection.co.uk](http://www.thelondonconnection.co.uk)

## ...and they're going underground in Dartford

WORK has started on construction of another 400kV tunnel in the South.

The Dartford cable tunnel, which will run from Littlebrook, in Kent, to Thurrock, in Essex, forms part of a two-year, multi-million pound project that is already under way.

It involves removing two 275kV cables that run beneath the road deck of the west Dartford road tunnel and running two replacement 275kV circuits in the new 1½-mile tunnel under the River Thames. About three-quarters of a mile of

associated overhead lines have already been removed.

National Grid's project manager Jim Street said: "By replacing existing cables with new cables in our own tunnel, the security of major and important National Grid assets is significantly increased. Removing the cables from the Dartford road tunnel also allows maintenance to be carried out without affecting traffic flow on London's orbital motorway network."

The new tunnel will be up to 35 metres below ground level — and

up to 20 metres below the river bed — and will be driven through chalk saturated with water. It will have a diameter of three metres. Creating the tunnel will take seven months.

Babtie, the UK-based technical and management consultancy, has been appointed as National Grid's consultant and site representative. The engineering services company AMEC will undertake the £16 million tunnel construction contract and ABB has won the £10m cable and switchgear contract.



## Easy does it for extension team

THE construction of an extension to London's 400kV City Road substation is now complete.

In order to connect the new substation to the electricity network, cables running underneath a canal towpath have been upgraded.

And project engineer Dave Palser said: "This was quite a contentious issue that needed careful management."

The 400kV indoor double busbar substation, equipped with gas insulated switchgear, has been built to meet London Electricity's requirement to take extra power from National Grid's 400kV supergrid system.

Alongside the City Basin canal towpath affected by the work are 24 flats and a care home.

Another section is a well-used through-route for local people and pupils attending a nearby school.

Dave said the towpath was temporarily closed so

that excavation and trench work could be carried out, but information about the project had been made widely available.

Visits had been made to people living alongside the towpath, information bulletins were sent out and a 24-hour query line was available. Local authorities were also kept updated on all aspects of the project.

Great care was taken with certain elements of the project because the substation was so close to houses, the care home, the school and businesses. And Islington Borough Council guided the design of the building to make sure it fitted in with its surroundings.

Meanwhile, National Grid has continued to support local charities, such as the Islington Boat Club and Groundwork, and, for the third year running, helped fund the Angel Canal Festival, which features many local charities.



City Road substation project has been completed



# Winners 'can make a real difference'

**A** SCHEME to help a food co-operative expand and a project to help people reduce fuel bills and carbon emissions were just two of the winners in the National Grid Community 21 Awards.



communities and it is run in partnership with the Improvement and Development Agency and the sustainable development charity Forum for the Future.

Ten local authorities shared almost £50,000 in prize money in the awards scheme that celebrates the best new ideas in sustainability.

There was also a £10,000 award for Wealden District Council for demonstrating outstanding community leadership. The money will be used to establish the priorities of communities on a more localised basis than in an earlier strategy.

The awards scheme aims to help councils in England and Wales play a bigger part in encouraging sustainable development in their

The winners were announced by leading environmentalist Jonathon Porritt, chairman of the Government's UK Sustainable Development Commission and programme director of Forum for the Future. He said: "We are celebrating hard-edge projects that serve people in real ways and make a real difference to their lives."

He added that the joy of the scheme was the opportunity it gave to celebrate the work of activists, community groups, local authorities and private enterprise involved in sustainable development.



From this...

Stable hand Kieron Ashforth carries a bale of shredded cardboard



to this...

PICTURE: CAVIAR HOUSE

MAIN PICTURE: Caviar ready for sale  
RIGHT (from top): the worms in action; Terry Rutter feeds worms to sturgeons; Terry holds one of the Siberian sturgeon



via this...



## You can have a fishy on a little

HERE'S A recipe for success:

- Take a pile of old cardboard, shred it and give it to farms and stables for horse bedding
- Muck out the soiled bedding and compost it by feeding it to worms
- Remove the excess worms and feed them to sturgeon fish
- Sell mature fish to top hotels
- Keep some fish and produce caviar for sale.

Sounds unlikely, doesn't it? But that's exactly the process involved in the community-based demonstration scheme run by the Andrew Barker Lepton Employment Project at an equestrian centre at Lepton, near Huddersfield.

But it's not just about demonstrating how waste cardboard packaging, previously destined for landfill, can be used to produce compost, fish food and ultimately fish and fish products for human consumption. It is also about providing a support system for disadvantaged young people and their communities from the

**KIRKLEES Metropolitan Council's winning Cardboard to Caviar project is one of the most innovative schemes to scoop a National Grid Community 21 Award. It has attracted huge media interest and the attention of Treasury Minister John Healey, who visited it himself. GridLine takes a closer look at the scheme that is breaking new ground in sustainability, as well as providing an opportunity for disadvantaged and long-term unemployed young people.**

Wakefield area by providing employment opportunities and the opportunity to boost their job-seeking skills.

The project — a partnership between Kirklees Council, the Green Business Network, East Wakefield Primary Care Trust and the charity Turning Point — was conceived more than two years ago.

Since 1995, GBN has been helping local businesses improve their environmental performance by recycling

their waste cardboard — shredded packaging is supplied to farms and stables for bedding.

ABLE was designed to take things a step further. It got under way in September 2001 with five trainees, led by project manager Terry Rutter, 47, with help from employment mentor, fish fanatic and qualified builder Mick Hinchliffe.

Terry — a keen angler, fish breeder and experienced manager — spent 25 years in banking with the Halifax before taking voluntary redundancy. He was looking for a new direction and found it with ABLE. "The job encompassed everything I enjoyed and gave me a chance to put something back into the community," he said.

The trainees — their average age is 25 — are offered a placement for up to 12 months. They get paid a proper wage for a 37½-hour week and receive training in life skills, such as job search techniques and computer literacy. Their health and welfare is also catered for and there is an opportunity to work towards an environmentally-based NVQ Level Two.

## dishy when the board comes in

"We were able to get going when the owner of Lepton Equestrian Centre offered us land and a derelict building," said Terry. "The trainees were involved from the start, helping virtually to rebuild the accommodation, using recycled materials where possible, and learning building skills from Mick as work progressed.

"Getting involved at this stage generated ownership for the trainees — they really felt able to buy into the project, and it also created team spirit.

"We furnished the place with unwanted office equipment donated by the Halifax. Surplus equipment was given to other projects or sold to raise funds. GBN-recycled carpet tiles were laid on the office floors and we even used recycled plastic planks and flooring blocks made from old plastic bags."

A 15-metre by two-metre purpose-built worm bed was constructed and a fish tank installed. The tank filters, cleans and recirculates water, greatly reducing the quantity used. Even the nutrients captured in the filter are useful. "We have

grown watercress and other plants on it — showing that in a larger operation, we could grow it commercially as a cash crop," said Terry.

For the initial research and development phase, 26 three-year-old Siberian sturgeon were introduced to the tank.

"They are very different from other fish," said Terry. "Although very strong, they are not aggressive and are curious creatures."

The Siberian sturgeon grows to about three metres and does not reach maturity — and able to provide caviar — until it is about seven years old. The first sturgeon settled in well and thrived, and Terry is about to go to France to bring back 500 baby sturgeon that should grow up to a metre in length in 15 months. Some of the more mature sturgeon will produce caviar three or four years after that.

About 60 horses are stabled at Lepton. When their bedding is mucked out, it is taken by wheelbarrow to ABLE's compost heap where, with regular turning, it spends the first month breaking down into

a rich soggy mixture. This is then placed in the worm bed — a layer at a time — where thousands of worms get to work.

"It's important to get the timing right," said Terry. "If they finish eating one layer, and another hasn't been added, they would literally climb out of the bed and vacate the property." Older worms are regularly harvested by hand and fed to the sturgeon. "The worms produce high quality compost, so eventually we will bag this up and sell it as another cash by-product," said Terry.

"The future of ABLE is really exciting," he added. "National Grid's award will help buy a second tank so that we can diversify and farm crayfish. Work is under way to expand our operation to a 34-acre site made available to us by Yorkshire Water. We hope to transform this former landfill site by incorporating a tree nursery, willow and hazel coppicing, and a rural crafts training centre. If things go to plan, up to 60 youngsters could be trained and given a new chance in life in the years to come."



# Bid to boost environment awareness

ENVIRONMENT Agency research reveals that environmental awareness among farmers remains low.

It says that 78 per cent of agricultural producers questioned in a survey did not believe they carried out activities that could be harmful to the environment.

But, when prompted, 87 per cent acknowledged carrying out at least one potentially harmful activity such as storing chemicals, oils or fuels.

With three-quarters of the land in England and Wales farmed, the way it is managed has a huge impact on the environment. Farming provides 54 per cent of the country's food and provides many environmental benefits, but it does have an adverse impact on soil, air and water quality.

Two new initiatives have been launched to address the lack of environmental awareness among the farming community:

- **online guidelines** designed to help farmers comply with their environmental responsibilities without having to contact the regulator. The NetRegs website explains complex environmental regulations using plain language, covering everything from agricultural waste and emissions to water and fuel storage

- **a new booklet**, entitled *Waterwise on the Farm*, is a simple guide promoting greater water efficiency in agriculture and highlighting ideas to save farmers money. The booklet has been developed in partnership with the National Farmers' Union and Linking Environment and Farming.

LEAF chairman and National Grid grantor Robert Campbell was with NFU president Ben Gill and Environment Agency chairman Sir John Harman when the two schemes were unveiled at the Royal Smithfield Show.

- The NetRegs is at [www.environment-agency.gov.uk/netregs](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/netregs)
- For a free hard copy of *Waterwise on the Farm*, e-mail [paula.wood@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:paula.wood@environment-agency.gov.uk) or phone 01903 832073. Copies are available for downloading at [www.environment-agency.gov.uk/savewater](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/savewater)

# Big support for charity's bird survey

FARMERS have given an enthusiastic thumbs-up to a scheme that promotes good relations between conservationists and the farming community.

The RSPB Volunteer & Farmer Alliance offers a free service that connects farmers who want to know more about birds on their farms with trained volunteers, who carry out early morning surveys during the breeding season.

In a survey, 98 per cent of farmers questioned said the bird study was worthwhile, and 70 per cent discovered they had species on their land they had not known about.

At least 85 per cent implemented the the scheme's farmland bird management guidelines — and twenty-six per cent used the results to support applications to the Countryside Stewardship Scheme, which makes payments to farmers and other land managers to enhance rural England.

Alliance project manager Jenny Atkins said: "The staggering amount of interest shown by farmers and volunteers is an

inspiration to RSPB staff and reinforces our belief that by working together with the farming community we can reverse the decline of farmland birds like skylarks and corn buntings."

The Alliance was launched in 1999 with just 40 farms in central England. The number involved more than doubled the following year by including the South East and East Anglia. Last year, 850 farms, covering 65,000 hectares across the UK, were surveyed, involving more than 1,000 volunteers, and 850 more farms will be visited this year. About 2,000 farmers have taken part so far.

Jenny said: "Demand within the farming community is such that we cannot always meet it and we are fully booked for this year. But if any National Grid grantor is interested in taking part, then they should get in touch as soon as possible and we will put them on the waiting list for next year."

- For further information, call Jenny on 01767 680551 or e-mail [jenny.atkins@rspb.org.uk](mailto:jenny.atkins@rspb.org.uk)



The lapwing... more common on farms in the North

**NEWS**  
THE Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) is a large landowner in the UK — and a National Grid grantor. In this issue of *GridLine*, we introduce a new RSPB initiative launched at this year's Royal Show, the RSPB Volunteer and Farmer Alliance. The RSPB has long recognised the vital role farming must play if we are to reverse the alarming declines in skylarks, song thrushes, lapwings and the other birds that depend on farmland. The alliance highlights the society's commitment to work with farmers to reverse this decline.

## Birdlife gets a helping hand

FARMING and wildlife conservation have not always found it easy to go hand in hand in recent years. RSPB public affairs manager Andre Farrar said: "In just 50 years, farmers have had to respond first to the priorities of post-war Britain and then to the production-led drive of the Common Agricultural Policy. "The resulting agricultural industry has left little room for wildlife. Birds like the tree sparrow have declined by more than 80 per cent in just 25 years, and corn buntings are all but lost from Wales. "But there is hope in the new RSPB Volunteer and Farmer Alliance. The project involves trained volunteers — including long-term RSPB volunteers, farmers and wildlife enthusiasts — carrying out a free and confidential bird survey of participating farms throughout the UK. At the end of the survey, the farmer is given a map showing which birds inhabit his land, and where they can be found. Andre said: "At the very least, he has details which can influence how he manages his land. He might discover, for example, that a particular hedgerow is an important habitat for a certain rare species. He can seek further advice from established organisations if he wishes. The sting on the cake is that the information produced can help with applications for funding through Countryside Stewardship. "We have been delighted by the response of farmers — already about 250 farms have taken part. Andre said that although future policy changes are vital, reform of the CAP will not come quickly enough to save many of the populations of birds. "Working with farmers is the only short-term approach that will buy time until the policy changes take effect," he said. Other initiatives include the RSPB's purchase of Hope Farm, an arable unit in Cambridgeshire, which is allowing the society to test farming solutions to the problem of dwindling wild bird populations. And, as an emergency measure, it is working with farmers in the UK to provide extra rations for seed-eating birds. This country-wide experiment should show if providing extra food in winter helps boost breeding numbers in the following spring. The alliance, he said, is another way the RSPB can work with farmers to make a real difference. "We know from experience that where the RSPB has worked directly with farmers, birds have benefited. For

Farmer Allan Vincent, right, at Stonebridge Farm with Nick Droy



**Did you know?**  
The RSPB, founded in 1884, is the

Flashback to how Gridline introduced the RSPB Volunteer & Farmer Alliance in 2000



Under threat... the tree sparrow

# Red alert for the poor tree sparrow

AN ASSESSMENT of the UK's bird population has been published in *The Population Status of Birds in the UK — Birds of Conservation Concern: 2002-2007*.

It uses a scheme of colour-coding to group the 247 species that are regularly to be found in the UK according to their status:

- **Red** — there are 40 species whose populations or range are rapidly declining. Included are the skylark, song thrush, tree sparrow, house sparrow, yellowhammer and lesser spotted woodpecker.
- **Amber** — there are 121 species whose populations are in moderate decline. They include the swallow and

dunnock, red kite, marsh harrier and Dartford warbler. The last three species were on the red list until recently, but have recovered earlier losses thanks to the success of conservation efforts by the RSPB and others.

**Green** — this contains all other species, which are increasing in number, are stable, or have decreased only slightly and which should be monitored to enable any future changes to be detected.

The list was agreed by a group of the UK's main bird conservation organisations, chaired by the RSPB.

- For further information, visit [www.rspb.org.uk/wildlife/birds/birdprio/bocc2.asp](http://www.rspb.org.uk/wildlife/birds/birdprio/bocc2.asp)

## Starling leads the way

Between 1999 and 2001, the Alliance surveys undertaken across England showed that:

- 62 per cent of farms throughout the country had house sparrows
- 65 per cent of the farms surveyed in East Anglia had turtle doves
- more farms had bullfinches

in central England than elsewhere

- lapwings were found on more farms in the North and North West
- the starling is the most common bird on those farms involved, followed by the blackbird and then the skylark.

## Online help sheets

New advisory sheets for farmers have been launched on the RSPB website, along with improved farming pages, accessible via [www.rspb.org.uk/farming](http://www.rspb.org.uk/farming). There is an e-mail link for you to send questions and comments.

The RSPB is also hoping to set up a web-based discussion group for farmers on conservation matters. This will be an independent website with a wide range of conservation advisers from the agricultural sector involved.

For further information, contact Richard Winspear on 01767 680551 or e-mail [richard.winspear@rspb.org.uk](mailto:richard.winspear@rspb.org.uk)





Archers actors Graham Roberts, second left, and Norman Painting, second right, with, left to right, National Grid's group head of safety, environment and corporate responsibility Gareth Llewellyn, Caroline Davis, chairman of the Tree Council, and Lord Best, at the House of Commons

# Archers stars honour tree champions

REPRESENTATIVES of the parish council of one of Britain's best-known villages — Ambridge, of BBC Radio 4's *The Archers* fame — joined tree champions for the presentation of awards for 10 years' dedicated work to protect the nation's trees and woodlands.



Ambridge's current tree warden George Barford, actor Graham Roberts, was joined by Phil Archer, actor Norman Painting, a vice-president of the Tree Council, for the event at the House of Commons to celebrate the Tree Council's National Grid Tree Warden Scheme.

The event was hosted by Brian Donohoe MP, a vice-

president of the Tree Council, who welcomed the volunteer tree wardens, their local network co-ordinators and other officials and politicians.

The reception was held to honour nearly 30 local authorities and voluntary organisations that have been co-ordinating local tree warden networks on behalf of the Tree Council for over a decade.

The Tree Council launched its countrywide tree warden scheme in 1990, and it has been sponsored by National Grid since 1997. Around 7,500 wardens planted over half a million trees in 2001 and dedicated 1.5 million hours to their communities' trees.

Nick Raynsford MP, Minister for Local Government, sent a message

of support: "I commend all those involved for their commitment and contribution to a project that, through planting and preserving trees, makes a truly valuable contribution to the local environment — one which we can all enjoy both now and in future generations."

The Tree Council's director of community projects Jon Stokes, who co-ordinates the schemes nationally, said: "Tree wardens are the eyes and ears of their local communities on tree matters and they form an important force in the conservation and improvement of Britain's treescape."

"However, without long-term support from their local authorities or other co-ordinating organisations the

efforts of tree wardens would not be so effective. These Tree Council Awards are our way of recognising this hard work and saying thank you to those who have run local networks with such commitment."

National Grid's external communications manager Ross Hayman said: "National Grid maintains more than 4,350 miles of high-voltage overhead power lines, mostly in the countryside, so the management and conservation of trees is very important to us."

"Local authorities and other organisations have a vital role to play in co-ordinating their local tree warden networks, which have made it possible for the tree wardens to achieve great things in their communities."

## Did you know?

- Every year, thousands of recently planted trees die from the lack of a few minutes of timely care.

- Tree professionals accept that often only half of their planted trees will survive beyond five years.

- Young trees need TLC — tending, loosening of ties and clearing of grass and weeds.

- For more information, visit [www.treecouncil.org.uk/projects.tlc.htm](http://www.treecouncil.org.uk/projects.tlc.htm)

# British trees are just great!

FIFTY of the UK's most outstanding trees are immortalised in a new book published by the Tree Council in celebration of the Queen's Golden Jubilee.

The publication of *Great British Trees* was made possible by National Grid Transco which has supported the National Grid Tree Warden Scheme since 1997.

The 112-page book features stunning colour photographs by Archie Miles and Edward Parker and fascinating, well-researched text. The foreword is by The Duke of Kent, the Tree Council's patron.

The 50 trees are some of the oldest, rarest and most striking in the country — and all have stories to tell. They were singled out from gardens, parks, churchyards, farmland and woods by the Tree Council, with help from enthusiastic tree wardens around the country.

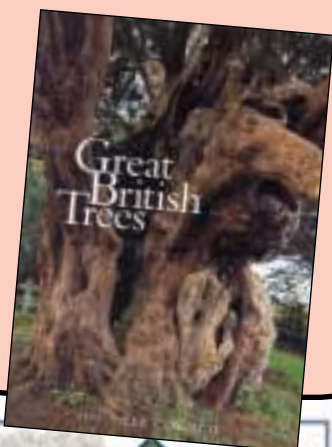
Compiled and written by the Tree Council's director of community projects Jon Stokes, the book gives an insight into why the 50 trees are "great" and why they were chosen. There is also information for those who might want to visit them. All 50 are marked with commemorative plaques given by National Grid Transco to their various custodians.

The Tree Council's director-general, Pauline Buchanan Black, said: "These splendid examples highlight the fundamental importance of trees to the national heritage and the need to ensure they are not lost through ignorance of their worth. We want to make trees matter to everyone."

National Grid Transco's external communications manager Ross Hayman, said:

"In the interests of safety we have to ensure that trees do not grow too close to our overhead power lines and therefore effective tree management is a vital part of our work. We have worked with the Tree Council for nearly 10 years and the help and advice we have received from them has been invaluable."

- If you don't win a free copy, *Great British Trees* (ISBN: 0-904853-02-0) is available by sending a cheque, payable to The Tree Council, for £8.99, including postage and packing, to The Tree Council, 51 Catherine Place, London SW1E 6DY.



**Join our Grantor's club, the benefits are tree-mendous**

**National Grid**

The drive is on to increase the membership of the National Grid Grantors' Club and update our records. If you haven't already joined all you need to do is fill in the application form here, fax it to 01929 433600 or send it and post it FREE to National Grid. If you have email, simply send your details to [www.organs@ngrid.com](mailto:www.organs@ngrid.com). And be quick... the first 500 applicants will receive a FREE copy of *Great British Trees*, the Tree Council's book that has immortalised 50 of the UK's outstanding trees.

The National Grid Grantors' Club — exclusive to farmers and landowners with the company's equipment on their land — has attractive benefits including:

- free access to our Grantors' Club Store at any agricultural show we attend — we've been at ten shows this year, for example
- All you need to do is turn up wearing your grantors' club membership badge for an informal chat and refreshments.

According to Tree Council's director-general Pauline Buchanan Black, this is the first time that the grantors' club membership badge for an informal chat and refreshments.

Personalise your copy of *Great British Trees* with your name and the name of your tree. It's a great way to ensure that they are not lost through ignorance of their worth.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

Call 01929 433600 or visit [www.organs@ngrid.com](http://www.organs@ngrid.com)

Join the National Grid Grantors' Club and you could win a free copy of *Great British Trees*. See the flyer enclosed with this issue of *Gridline*...

# Warden puts winnings back into woods

DROITWICH Woods in Worcestershire are to be given a new lease of life thanks to National Grid tree warden Roger Claxton.

Roger, a 60-year-old retired engineer, and one of more than 60 tree wardens in Worcestershire, scooped a £2,000 windfall in a national draw run by the Tree Council after he contributed to a countryside survey of tree warden activities.

He decided his prize would be used to improve the woods that badly need some TLC.

"About 5,000 trees were planted densely 25 years ago, with the expectation of a 25-30 per cent failure rate," said Roger. "No one bothered to keep an eye on them over the years and now they desperately need thinning as the failure rate in most areas was almost zero."

"Thinning will save some of the most valued species of trees that are being shaded out by the more vigorous, but less important species, such as ash and cherry, which rapidly outgrow oak. Oak plays host to about 10 times more species of flora and fauna than ash."

"We also want to open up pathways with glades, and



Cheque this... Roger Claxton receives the £2,000 cheque from Jon Stokes, watched by tree warden Wade Muggleton, left, and National Grid wayleaves officer Richard Evans, right

coppice some areas to give a more natural profile and let light into the wood. We want to introduce native shrubs that will provide flowers and food for insects and animals, and we plan to coppice ash that will eventually provide adjacent allotment holders with bean poles and other garden items — thus saving the import of bamboo canes."

Roger said wood cut down would be stacked in piles to provide a site for fungi and beetles. The beetles would help control unwanted pests on the allotments and the increase in small mammals in the wood would give extra food for the buzzards and owls

in the area. By making pathways wider and safer, it was hoped that more walkers would visit the area to use the 7.5-mile Droitwich Green Necklace footpath when it is completed.

Jon Stokes, director of community projects for the Tree Council who co-ordinates the scheme nationally, said: "We are very pleased to hear what great plans Roger has for using his prize money. In setting out to improve Droitwich this way, he will certainly be doing his bit as a very active tree warden."

Roger, who spends two days a week on tree warden duties, has always loved trees.

"Trees form such unique shapes — if you are out walking in the countryside, you can tell a chestnut tree from miles away."

When Roger decided to retire four years ago, he looked around for something to keep him occupied. The Tree Council's National Grid Tree Warden Scheme appealed. He said: "I was forever looking for places to plant trees, or for another tree to look after, even if it wasn't mine!"

Roger says that he probably won't be around to see Droitwich Woods mature into a new English woodland. "But at least I'll have the satisfaction of setting it on its way," he said.



# Centre the best source of energy info

THE Farm Energy Centre is the UK's leading source of information on the application of energy-based techniques in farming and horticulture.

It works with farmers, utilities — including National Grid — research institutes and manufacturers providing expertise on energy applications and efficiency.

It covers activities from energy auditing and brokering to energy efficiency planning and product testing and evaluation.

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, Horticultural Development Council and the Health and Safety Executive.

Its database of techniques and equipment allows farmers to track down suppliers of specific equipment, and the

FEC Trade Membership scheme helps bring manufacturers and clients together.

For more detailed information about the FEC, visit [www.farmenergy.com](http://www.farmenergy.com)

For more information about any of the issues highlighted on these pages, contact the FEC at NAC, Stoneleigh, Kenilworth, Warwickshire CV8 2LS. Tel: 024 7669 6512 or e-mail: [info@farmenergy.com](mailto:info@farmenergy.com)

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

## Farm audits pay off

ENERGY auditing on farms is important as a means of reducing costs and demonstrating a commitment to the environment and energy efficiency.

Many farmers use it to comply with quality assurance schemes that demand an appropriate policy as part of being signed up to the scheme.

For everyone, time spent on the audit will be quickly paid back in reduced fuel bills.

The FEC can offer two levels of service to farmers wishing to audit their energy use — a self-audit system or on-farm auditing.

There are five self-audit packs covering different farm types — field vegetables, horticulture, pig, dairy and poultry farms.

These are step-by-step guides and allow the user to put together an action plan to address problem areas. When the plan is returned to FEC, it is checked by the experts and a certificate of audit is issued.

The plan is backed up by regular newsletters and an optional comprehensive reference folder on energy efficiency. The cost of the audit package is £65 + VAT. The reference folder is £60 + VAT.

If you prefer, you can ask an FEC engineer to visit for on-farm auditing. They have considerable experience of on-farm auditing and can produce a plan for any type of farm. You can also hire monitoring equipment that can track electricity consumption on a half-hourly basis.



## Pack proved its worth for Liz

LIZ JOHNSON is well aware of the value of the FEC's self-audit packs.

She is the farm technical manager with arable and salad growers G S Shropshire and Sons in Cambridgeshire, a family business established more than 50 years ago.

The company was the first winner of the Cambridgeshire Bio-Diversity Challenge County Awards in 2001, which invited companies to demonstrate how they are caring for wildlife and incorporating environment-friendly practices into their workplace.

"We have been using the self-audit packs since 1997," said Liz, pictured above. "They are user-friendly and really get you thinking about how we can save energy in all sorts of different operations, from vegetable storage to machinery use."

"We decided, for instance, to buy machinery with lower running costs and a selection of machinery to reduce the number of passes — an eight-row celery planter for example. We also ensure regular maintenance and servicing to ensure efficiency."

# Drive is on to lower tax

DO you know... inverter drives, the control systems that save energy by enabling electric motors to be run at reduced speeds, attract tax-saving Enhanced Capital Allowances (ECAs)?

ECAs were introduced among a package of measures giving financial encouragement to invest in energy efficient equipment.

Cost of equipment has always been a limiting factor, so ECAs are a useful incentive — allowing companies to write off 100 per cent of their expenditure on approved equipment against tax in the first year. Inverter drives, or variable speed drives, are among the list of technologies that currently qualify.

Inverter drives have many applications, including pumping and conveying and ventilation. They also help in reducing high starting currents, which can be a problem



for farmers operating on weaker electricity supplies.

The Farm Energy Centre assessed the use of inverter drive equipment on an irrigation pump installation. Results showed energy reductions compared with conventional mechanical pressure control.

The reduction could be up to 25 per cent for some installations.

Other benefits identified on an irrigation system incorporating two 50hp pumps were:

- reduced labour requirements for adding/removing hose reels irrigators from the system due to an enhanced control system
- smoother start up and shut down of the pumps
- reduction in pump maintenance and burst pipes.

If you are considering installing an inverter drive, energy savings and an ECA could make the decision easier.

The FEC can advise on suppliers of equipment and a bulletin is available on its use on an irrigation pump installation. Contact the FEC on the number above or email [peter@farmenergy.com](mailto:peter@farmenergy.com)

WAREHOUSES and storage areas use high amounts of energy resulting in large bills.

But reductions of more than 50 per cent are easily achievable if warehouse management takes a look at lighting design and use and implements a control system.

Help is now at hand with the publication of a new guide from Action Energy.

*The Lighting of Warehouses and Storage Areas (Ref: Lighting Guide 006)* has been published to ensure safe and efficient working conditions are created and to increase the understanding of lighting design.

The guide outlines the importance of introducing controls, which will in turn reduce consumption. A few control methods can dramatically reduce costs, encouraging maximum use of daylight and avoiding unnecessary use of lighting.

## Guide has loads of new data in store

The guide examines issues such as time controls; purchasing lighting which saves energy by being gradually dimmed; lighting staff areas at higher levels than areas with little or no staff; installing occupancy detectors, which

can sense movement and light the area accordingly and in high and open areas, avoiding dark shadows and casting light on all vertical sources for the reading of labels and marks.

To receive a free copy of the publication or for information on Action Energy, organisations should call the helpline — 0800 58 57 94, or visit [www.actionenergy.org.uk](http://www.actionenergy.org.uk)

- Action Energy — previously known as the Energy Efficiency Best Practice programme — was created in 1989. The programme has helped many organisations save up to 20 per cent on their bills, which equates to total UK energy savings of about £800 million a year.



## Watch your overheads

CONTRACTORS and people delivering goods are especially at risk if you have overhead lines on your premises.

YOU know they are there — they may not.

There has been a steady increase in vehicles making contact with overhead lines which has already led to fatal accidents.

Most overhead cables are bare with no insulation around them so making contact or getting near the lines can cause serious problems. It is dangerous to assume the lorry driver or contractor has seen the lines — a reminder could avert a serious accident.

The increasing height of material-handling machines and other agricultural equipment means clearances between vehicles and lines are diminishing.

If in doubt, contact your local distribution company — better safe than sorry!

## Voltage control kit hits the UK

NEW Japanese-designed equipment (pictured) that saves energy and reduces bills by controlling voltage is now available in the UK.

"Ask anyone what the UK electricity voltage should be and they would guess at 240V," said the FEC's Andrew Kneeshaw.

"The officially declared voltage is 230V with a tolerance of -6 per cent to +10 per cent. So actual voltage can legally lie between 216V and 253 V — quite a range.

"Interestingly, in most situations, the voltage is usually towards the high end of the operational band.

"In most cases lowering voltage on equipment reduces consumption. In a recent test on a



supermarket site, it was shown that lowering the voltage by six per cent reduced the amount of energy used by 10 per cent."

Andrew said that marginally reducing voltage affects equipment in various ways. Heaters or water heaters are slightly less effective and simply deliver a little less

heat. If a thermostat is used, the equipment operates a little longer to produce the same effect, using the same energy as before.

"Lights use less energy and last much longer but their output is reduced slightly," he added. "With motors, operation is invariably more efficient.

"In a nutshell, lowering voltage for lighting and motive load saves energy and affects little else."

- Contact Andrew at the FEC for more information.



## Contacts

For further information contact your local wayleave teams on:

**North:** 0113 2908236

**South:** 01245 592028

Your wayleave teams and their contact mobile phone numbers

### North East

Wilson Holmes

07836 543539

Scott Stephenson

07836 543541

### North West

Mark Thomas

07887 825073

Martin Bretherton

07786 021086

### North East (South)

Mike Rockett

07836 364634

Janet Clarke

07770 645599

### North West (South)

Alan Whitmore

07836 629530

Bob Tute

07836 668504

### East Midlands

Robin O'Brien

07836 293137

Simon Booth

07786 021088

### West Midlands

Richard Evans

07776 225888

Paul Ganley

07836 549748

### East Anglia

Barry Cullimore

07836 217478

Amy Jones

07836 200761

### South East (North London)

Brian Mead

07836 217520

Phil Burgess

07836 222051

### South East (South London)

Paul Sage

07836 638823

Alison Williams

07788 568678

### South Wales

Simon Gronow

07836 207262

Sandra Stevens

07776 161429

### South West

Richard Biggs

07785 716961

Jane Bishop

07771 864528

### 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 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).



Mark and his wife Sylvia check on their horse Fairy at Westerfield

# Mark gives his all to the community

**M**ANY National Grid grantors still find the time and energy to put something back into their community, despite the demands of running a business and meeting the challenges of modern day living.

A classic example is 73-year-old Suffolk farmer Mark Partridge, a former parish councillor and stalwart of the local Baptist Church, who has championed equestrianism in the county for almost 40 years.

He has supported the British Show Jumping Association in Suffolk for decades and, with his wife Sylvia, has hosted countless horse shows at his 324-hectare farm at Westerfield, near Ipswich. One of these is the annual Westerfield Horse Show, which has raised thousands of pounds for charity over the years.

Mark has also been a show jumping judge for more than 30 years and, for a long time, built BSJA show jumping courses for shows in Suffolk and surrounding counties.

He comes from true farming stock — his ancestors farmed as far back as the 1500s. A former Suffolk county chairman of the National Farmers' Union, Mark recently retired as the area representative of the BSJA after 37 years — believed to make him the longest-serving area rep in the association's history.

Mark's love affair with horses began when he was just three and was put on the back of his brother's pony for the first time. "I can still remember my father riding around our farm on horseback, visiting all the farm workers as they got on with their jobs," said Mark.

He was brought up on the family farm at Kersey — one of Suffolk's prettiest villages —

and went on to study agriculture at Newcastle University, graduating in the early 1950s. "I don't think I ever seriously considered any other career," he said. After graduation, he returned to work on the family farm, then ran his own 81-hectare farm at Winesham before moving to Westerfield in the early 1960s.

Today the farm is crossed by the 400kV Sizewell-Bramford overhead line and has 12 towers on the land. "I well remember the line being constructed and seeing the hole dug for the first tower in 1963/64," said Mark. "Over the years, as I acquired more land, I also acquired more towers — I always tell people that I liked the first couple so much, I had to have more."

Since those days, Mark has dealt with at least five wayleave officers, including Barry Cullimore for the past 15 years. Mark and Sylvia have twin children — their daughter Joy, also a keen rider, works with her father, while her brother Philip runs the arable side of the farm.

Mark oversees the cattle-rearing and still enjoys getting out at the weekend to care for the cattle. After 40-odd years, he says, it's hard to get out of the habit of doing all the weekend feeding.

## Safety first advice

**BE SURE** you know who is working on your land. That is the advice of wayleave staff to grantors. All National Grid personnel and their contractors carry identification. Ask to see it if you are unsure about people visiting your site or farm.