

Wye Community Land Trust

2a Briar Close, Bramble Lane, Wye, Kent TN25 5HB
www.wyecomcommunitylandtrust.org.uk

February 2007

Dear Agricola Club member

The Wye College Farm: A New Chapter

As you may know, after 100 years of international importance for agriculture, all academic and research interest in the Wye College Farm is coming to an end. During 2007 it is possible that Imperial College may consider letting the farm on a commercial basis. In anticipation of this opportunity a new initiative, the Wye Community Land Trust (WCLT), has formed to bid for the tenancy.

The WCLT vision is for the College Farm to:

- Support a wide range of agricultural enterprises, producing 'local food for local people'.
- Manage the land sympathetically to protect and enhance Wye's biodiversity and landscape quality.
- Provide employment, training and volunteering opportunities.
- Form close links with schools and act as an 'outdoor classroom'.
- Produce an economic return sufficient to support the above aims and allow for investment in further initiatives (e.g. renewable energy crops, added value enterprises etc).

How would it work?

- The WCLT would be incorporated as a charitable Industrial and Provident Society (IPS) for the benefit of the community, regulated under the Industrial and Provident Societies Acts 1965-1978.
- The WCLT would raise sufficient funds to secure the tenancy and equip and stock the farm, through a share issue.
- Each share would cost £50, with anyone owning a share becoming a member of the WCLT.
- The WCLT would be managed by a board, elected from and by the members. (One vote per member, irrespective of the number of shares owned).
- The board would employ a farm manager, who would be supported by the board in delivering the objectives of the WCLT.
- IPS members do not receive interest or dividends. WCLT trading surpluses (profits) may only be used to maintain prudent reserves and on expenditure to achieve the trust's objectives.

What happens now?

For the current steering group, the next stage is to put together a detailed business plan in anticipation of the tenancy becoming available. This next stage will only be pursued if it is clear that there is sufficient support for the vision – from local residents and businesses, from relevant statutory and voluntary bodies, from ex-students of Wye College and from anyone else who sees the benefits to be had from this initiative.

What do I do now?

Please complete and return the form below as soon as possible. The form can also be downloaded from our website, www.wyecomcommunitylandtrust.org.uk

The website also features more detailed information about the project, as well as regular updates on progress.

Thank you

The Wye Community Land Trust Steering Group (members listed on website)

A note from Francis Huntington, Honorary Secretary of the Agricola Club:

Your committee has agreed to authorise this mailing as a part of their policy of keeping members informed of developments at Wye. You are assured that the integrity of the mailing list has been safeguarded.

✕.....

1) We would be interested in helping to launch this initiative, and can offer the following skills/ expertise (please state: agricultural expertise, legal advice, business planning, fundraising, IT support etc...)

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2) Should the vision for a Wye Community Land Trust become a reality, I/we would be interested in buying the following number of shares at £50 per share:

0..... 1..... 2-10..... 11-20..... 21-50..... 51-100..... 100+.....

3) (Optional) I/We would like to make a no-obligation donation of £..... to help cover the costs of researching and developing this initiative (cheques payable to 'Wye Community Land Trust').

4) Providing your contact details is optional – please only do so if you wish to be kept informed of future developments.

Name e-mail

Address

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Please return to: Wye Community Land Trust, 2a Briar Close, Bramble Lane, Wye, Kent TN25 5HB.