

Ruralspotlight

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Winter 2024/2025

IN THIS EDITION:

SCOTTISH AGRI-TRIP

ULSTER FARMERS UNION AGRI-CONFERENCE

5 NATIONS CONFERENCE AT CRAWFORDSBURN

YFCU REACT TO THE GOVERNMENT'S FAMILY FARM TAX

**95TH
ANNIVERSARY
CELEBRATED IN STYLE**
[SEE PAGES 6&7]

JAMES MORRISON
TALKS ABOUT LIFE
ON THE FARM
PAGES 16-17



CONTENTS

- 04 President's Foreword
- 06 – 07 Celebrating 95 Years of YFCU
- 08 YFCU react to the Government's Budget Announcement
- 10 YFCU host 5 Nations Member Conference
- 13 Ulster Farmers' Union & YFCU Agricultural Conference
- 14 Members visit the Scottish Borders for Agricultural trip
- 16 – 17 Life On The Farm with James Morrison
- 18 Upcoming Competitions Calendar
- 19 – 23 Competition Round Up
- 24 – 30 Club News

Editor: Rachel Armstrong
Designers: Media Design & Print
Printers: Media Design & Print

For all editorial and advertising enquiries, please contact YFCU HQ;

Email: rachel.armstrong@yfcu.org
Telephone: 028 9037 0713
Address: Young Farmers' Clubs of Ulster
475 Antrim Road, Belfast BT15 3BD

YFCU HQ TEAM



DEREK LOUGH

Chief Executive Officer

E: derek.lough@yfcu.org

M: 07355094350



KIRSTY BARR

Finance Manager

E: kirsty.barr@yfcu.org

M: 07562689956



RUTH MEGAHEY

Business Services Manager

E: ruth.megahey@yfcu.org

M: 07562689957



HEATHER STEWART

Events & Marketing Manager

E: heather.stewart@yfcu.org

M: 07788146100



HAYLEY SLOAN

Assistant Events Manager

E: hayley.sloan@yfcu.org

M: 07771886533



SARAH HALLIDAY

Membership & Club Development Executive

E: sarah.halliday@yfcu.org

M: 07355090923



RACHEL ARMSTRONG

Marketing & Communications Executive

E: rachel.armstrong@yfcu.org

M: 07562689959



HELEN SCOTT

Finance & Administration Assistant

E: helen.scott@yfcu.org

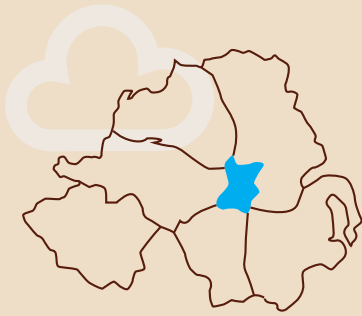
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FRONT COVER IMAGE: L-R Kristina Fleming (Deputy President), Joyce Allen (Vice President), Claire Young (Dungiven YFC), Mitchell Park (Chairperson of AERA Committee) and Matthew Livingstone (Vice President).

ESTABLISHED in 1929



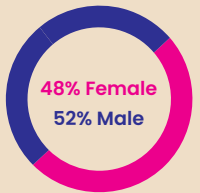
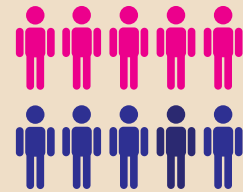
Founder: William Staveley Armour



More than
50 clubs
across NI
spread out
across six
counties



3500+
members



YFC travel

The YFCU Exchange Programme offers members the opportunity to travel on a unique exchange trip to countries worldwide. Long term trips include the USA, Canada, Australia, Germany, Finland, Sweden, Austria and Norway with short term trips including England, Scotland and Wales.



Includes:
Agricultural, Sport,
Arts & Drama



Training & Development Opportunities include:

- AQA Unit Award Scheme
- First Aid Qualifications
- Practical Skills
- Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme



PARTNERSHIPS WITH:
Farm Safety Foundation
Farm Safety Partnership
Rural Crime Partnership

OUR FUNDERS



There is no requirement to be a farmer or come from a farming background to join – the only requirement for membership is an interest in rural life.



PRESIDENT'S FOREWORD



Richard Beattie

The Autumn months have seen another busy start to the YFCU calendar. I was delighted to attend County Down, County Antrim and County Armagh YFC's dinners and celebrate their continued success. I also had the pleasure of attending the celebrations of Kells & Connor YFC's 65th Anniversary, Randalstown YFC's 65th Anniversary, Rathfriland YFC's 80th Anniversary and Gleno Valley YFC's 90th Anniversary. I thoroughly enjoyed meeting up with the members of the different clubs and celebrating their achievements. The Farming Life Awards was another fantastic event that I attended, it was great to see so many members recognised on the night.

Our competition season kicked off again after the Summer, and as always, it was great to see the range of talent from our members. I take this opportunity to encourage all members to get involved in our competitions, as they are a great way of meeting new people and learning new skills. The Public Speaking and Group Debating finals were excellent and it was great to see so many members go along to support one another. I particularly enjoyed the Choir Festival which was held at Methodist College and saw Coleraine YFC win first prize overall. The talent displayed at

this event was sensational and it was a great way for everyone to get in the festive spirit.

I attended a Road Safety Partnership information event at Stormont in October 2025. The graphic detail really brought to the life the extent of road traffic collisions. The Road Safety Partnership would be happy to hold talks for our different clubs and I strongly advise clubs to take them up on this offer as I found it very interesting. Our YFCU AERA Committee had the opportunity to meet with Minister Andrew Muir and discuss the challenges that farmers are facing at this current time and highlight the ongoing crisis of TB and planning restrictions.

YFCU hosted the 5 Nations Member Conference this year and I made a point of going out to Crawfordsburn Scout Centre to meet the members and thank our HQ staff for organising the event. Our YFCU exchange programme is another great opportunity for members to meet new people and gain insight into our sister organisations across the UK and Ireland.

Following the Government's announcement regarding family farm tax, I attended the Ulster Farmers' Union rally at the Eikon Exhibition Centre and went along with our CEO Derek Lough and AERA Committee Chairperson Mitchell Park to London where we attended the Ulster Farmers' Union mass lobby and protest, all in a hope to make our voices heard. I then went on to visit the House of Commons, giving evidence to the Northern Ireland Selection Committee on the adverse effects the APR and tax change will have on Northern Ireland farms.

There were many other key events that I had the pleasure of attending which included the Northern Ireland Farmers' Choir Carol Service, the

Angus Youth Forum Challenge, the Nuffield Farming Conference and the Oxford Farming Conference. These opportunities allowed me to speak with industry leaders, gain a better insight into the adaptation and limits of new technologies and meet up with members from the Scottish Association of Young Farmers Clubs and the National Federation of Young Farmers' Clubs. I enjoy going with other members to represent our organisation at these events. It was with special thanks to the Irish Farmers' Journal and the Thomas Henry Foundation for their financial support in getting our members to the Oxford Farming Conference.

To finish, I enjoyed celebrating 95 years of YFCU with a thanksgiving service and a dinner dance. Our thanksgiving service was held at Glarryford Farmers' Hall in November and seen an audience of over 100 people, with entertainment by the Northern Ireland Farmers' Choir, a speech by Past President Thoburn McCaughey and all proceeds went to our Wellbeing & Development Committee. In January 2025, we had 340 members (past and present), sponsors and esteemed guests join with us at Corick House Hotel. It was great to have Minister Andrew Muir in attendance, alongside our Patrons Pam Robinson and Rory Best. This was definitely a brilliant start to 2025 and I look forward to what the next 95 years hold for YFCU.

The last four months surely flew in and I wish to extend my thanks to all sponsors for their continued support of our organisation, our staff at Headquarters for their hard work behind the scenes, our different committees and every member for everything that they do to make YFCU what it is today. We now look forward to a busy competition season, our Annual General Meeting, the Balmoral Show and supporting members as they embark on different travel experiences.

SAVE THE DATE
YFCU Annual General Meeting
 Friday 11th, Saturday 12th &
 Sunday 13th April 2025
 Armagh City Hotel

Photo Caption: L-R, Stephen McCartney (Fibre Ambassador Manager), Derek Lough (YFCU CEO) and Brooke Cameron (Fibre Ambassador).



Proudly sponsored by

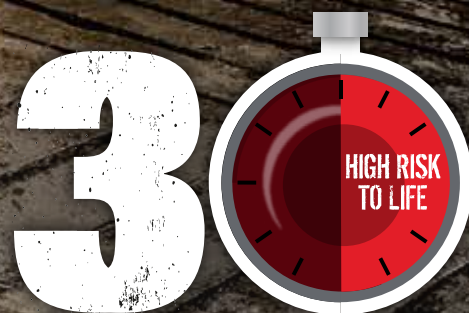


BEFORE YOU MIX **SLURRY**, STOP AND THINK!

Remove all stock, open all doors
and leave shed immediately
after mixing starts



Allow area to ventilate for at least
30 minutes after the pump has been
stopped before re-entering the building





"It was great to network with representatives from different county clubs and learn more about the work of the organisation and some of the challenges the sector faces through the first-hand experiences of the next generation of farmers." **William Sufferin (Senior Landowner Engagement Lead at SONI)**

CELEBRATING A MOMENTOUS MILESTONE

95TH ANNIVERSARY

'The Young Farmers' Clubs of Ulster celebrated their 95th Anniversary with a semi-formal event at Corick House Hotel & Spa'

The Young Farmers' Clubs of Ulster (YFCU) marked a momentous milestone on Saturday 25th January 2025 as they hosted a semi-formal event at Corick House Hotel & Spa in Clogher, County Tyrone to celebrate their 95th Anniversary.

Whilst Storm Éowyn may have caused significant damage across the province, leaving many homes without power and water, there was

still over 300 people from across Northern Ireland who traded their wellington boots for semi-formal attire, for an unforgettable evening of celebration. Amongst the crowd were members (past and present), sponsors and esteemed guests including Andrew Muir (Minister of Agriculture, Environment, and Rural Affairs of Northern Ireland) and Rory Best (former Irish rugby union player and Patron of YFCU). Guests were greeted with a sparkling drinks reception (kindly sponsored by Corick House Hotel & Spa), a three-course meal and live music by 'The Untouchables'.

Chief Executive Officer for the YFCU, Derek Lough, thanked the four event sponsors who generously contributed to the evening to ensure it was a huge success. They were the Livestock Meat Commission, Ulster Farmers' Union, SONI Limited and NFU Mutual.

Richard Beattie (YFCU President) opened the evening with a speech, appreciating the significance of the milestone and acknowledging how the organisation has gone from strength to strength. Richard said "Young Farmers has certainly given me many great opportunities,





which range from performing at the Waterfront Hall, Ulster Hall and Millenium Forum to hosting exchanges and travelling as far as Switzerland, Estonia and Belgium". Richard explained that YFCU is a fun organisation, and it's the members that help to define what it is. "YFCU has always been the social centre of the rural scene and it's easy to see why it has been successful for 95 years, retaining over 50 clubs and over 3500 members across the province", he recalled.



Andrew Muir (Minister of Agriculture, Environment, and Rural Affairs of Northern Ireland) was the guest speaker for the evening. Minister Muir opened his speech by thanking everyone who had helped to clear the roads and replenish the damage left behind by Storm Eowyn. He touched on what his department are trying to achieve regarding the Family Farm Tax announcement by the UK Government and his plans for the future of agriculture in Northern Ireland, saying he sees a positive future for young people in farming.

Thoburn McCaughey was President of the YFCU from 2009 to 2011 and gave a short review of the history

of the organisation. He explained that the organisation was founded by William Staveley Armour, a man who came to appreciate and understand the difficulties that Farmer's face in Northern Ireland. "W.S Armour named one of the most promising features of the YFCU movement as a practical starting point to benefit young people living in rural communities across Northern Ireland", he explained.

A raffle was held towards the end of the evening with all proceeds going to the YFCU. The prizes were 20 bags of calf feed (kindly donated by Chestnutt Animal Feeds), an overnight stay at Corick House Hotel & Spa (kindly donated by Corick House Hotel & Spa) and an Ulster Rugby playing jersey (signed by Rory Best).

William Sufferin (Senior Landowner Engagement Lead at SONI) commented, "We were delighted to attend and support the 95th anniversary of the Young Farmer's Clubs of Ulster. It was great to network with representatives from different county clubs and learn more about the work of the organisation and some of the challenges the sector faces through the first-hand experiences of the next generation of farmers. SONI is proud to be a platinum partner of YFCU as we recognise how instrumental the farming community is to Northern Ireland's energy transition, and we welcome the opportunity to play our part by helping to invest in the future of farming through supporting YFCU."

Lauren Hamilton (Sales Development Manager at NFU Mutual) said "It was a wonderfully well-organised event, and the anecdotes, memories and camaraderie was evident throughout all generations attending. It speaks volumes as to how this rural youth organisation has transcended the decades



and still lives out the vision that W.S Armour had 95 years ago. It is a credit to YFCU to continue this legacy and to all members past and present who are such ambassadors for the organisation. I want to wish everyone at YFCU every success for the future and look to continue the affiliation between NFU Mutual, NFU Mutual Charitable Trust and YFCU".

Deputy President of the YFCU, Kristina Fleming, presented Bob Esler with a gavel, marking his dedication to the organisation for 27 years of being the respected Honorary Treasurer. Kristina thanked Bob for his leadership and guidance, wishing him all the best for his retirement from YFCU. "It was great to see so many past and present members celebrating our organisation. I look forward to what the next 95 years hold and celebrating our 100th Anniversary in 2030", Kristina said.



YFCU REACT TO THE GOVERNMENT'S BUDGET ANNOUNCEMENT



"As Young Farmers, we will endeavour to ensure our members are best informed on how to manage these changes."

Following Chancellor Rachel Reeves' announcement on Wednesday 30th October 2024 regarding inheritance tax relief for farms, people reacted with disappointment and anger, and the YFCU were no different. Chief Executive Officer of the Young Farmers' Clubs of Ulster (YFCU), Derek Lough said "The budget certainly created much concern for our young members".

Over 6,500 people attended the Ulster Farmers' Union (UFU) rally on Monday 18th November 2024 at the Eikon Exhibition Centre and many YFCU members were amongst the large crowds. Farmers, landowners, and supporters of the agriculture community across Northern Ireland came together in a show of unity, aiming to protect their heritage, livelihoods, and right to farm.

Chairperson of the YFCU Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (AERA) Committee, Mitchell Park said "The current budget is going to have

a huge impact on the viability of family farms as they pass from one generation to the next. As an organisation made up of young farmers, it will heavily affect our members, whether we can remain on the land or not. Our generation will feel the impact of it".

Derek Lough (CEO), Richard Beattie (President) and Mitchell Park (Chairperson of AERA Committee) represented YFCU at a large-scale protest in London on Tuesday 19th November 2024. They joined thousands of farmers to urge the government to change course over its family farm tax plans. Derek Lough commented, "Farm families will need to take some time to digest and try to make sense of the impact that this will have on their farming business. I strongly encourage all our members to start having a conversation around succession on the farm and make a start at planning to reduce the impact that potential inheritance tax could have on their future generations. Without

having the conversation and putting appropriate plans in place, the viability of the Northern Ireland family farm model could be at risk".

The YFCU is Northern Ireland's leading rural youth organisation with over 3,500 members aged 12 – 30. President Richard Beattie is concerned about fellow members and said, "This announcement is going to have dramatic effects on our farming members and certainly the entire rural community. As Young Farmers, we will endeavour to ensure our members are best informed on how to manage these changes. I fear that the next generation's ability to carry on farming will be taken away, and farmers will be forced to sell land and other elements of their farm to pay the cost of tax. Farmers play such a vital role here in Northern Ireland and they have been significantly let down by our Government".



From a Graduate's point of view

LOGAN WILLIAMS



A BIT OF BACKGROUND...

HAVING GROWN UP in rural Wales on the family farm, there was nothing better than after school and at weekends spent out on the farm. This passion for agriculture grew stronger and stronger as the years went by, which led me to follow my passion for agriculture by paving a career in the industry.

Having completed my A-levels the next step was university, 3 years were spent studying at Aberystwyth where I gained a first class degree in Agriculture with Animal Science. My time at university provided the opportunity to widen my knowledge of the industry and to gain a greater understanding of the science and developments within agriculture.

During the final year of my studies, I started looking for career paths that would provide me with the opportunity to develop my professional skills and start a rewarding career. Having completed my dissertation on comparing the performance of finishing store lambs, I had always had a keen interest in the food supply chain and what happened beyond the farm gate.

In October 2024, I was fortunate to attend the Farmers Weekly Awards 2024. Having been shortlisted for an award, it was great to be able to celebrate with such inspirational farmers and stakeholders at the most prestigious awards in the industry. Hearing my name being called out as the winner of the Ag Student of the Year was unbelievable and something I will cherish for years to come. It certainly took a few days to sink in and was a fantastic ending to my academic studies.



CAREER BEGINNINGS

Shortly after graduating, I joined Dunbia working as an agriculture graduate on the Agriculture Team, based at the beef and lamb processing site at Llanybydder, West Wales. During my first few months at Dunbia I was fortunate to spend time in numerous departments within the business from the abattoir to boning hall, and sales to planning, which truly expanded my understanding of how the red meat processing industry comes together across the whole supply chain from farm to fork.

Since then, I have attended numerous industry events to engage with farmers and industry leaders in addition to welcoming farmers to the site for presentations and live to dead events. Being involved with these events have been great to meet and engage with some of our producers.

AT HOME

When not at work, there is nothing better than being out on the farm at home. We run a flock of prominently Mule ewes crossed with Texel rams to produce prime lambs, we also produce yearling ewes to sell for breeding on an annual basis. With sheep, comes the need for a sheepdog or two and that's another great passion of mine, training and trailing with my working sheepdogs. The initial intention was to train a sheepdog just for the farm, but this has escalated, and I now regularly training numerous dogs per annum and compete across the country, having been fortunate to be qualify for the Welsh team on a few occasions to compete at International and World Trials.

Its safe to say, whether at work or at home on the farm, my life revolves around agriculture, but I wouldn't want it any other way! We are a part of an industry that produces top quality food and that's something we should all be proud of. ■



See you next time in the next issue of Rural Dispatch

5 NATIONS CONFERENCE

The Young Farmers Clubs of Ulster (YFCU), hosted the 5 Nations Members' Conference from Wednesday 16th to Sunday 20th October 2024, in the Scout Centre at Crawfordsburn County Park in Bangor. Supported by Dale Farm, the Young Farmers' Association, Dunbia, NFU Mutual (North and East Down), Mulligan's Bakery and Leam Agri, this event hosted twenty young people from across the five nations.

Across the five-day event, participants had the opportunity to engage with members from

across Northern Ireland, Ireland, Wales, England and Scotland, sharing valuable insights into each organisation, their structures and roles in Young Farmers. Working together, members experienced the best of what Northern Ireland has to offer and heard from local business professionals about their development and diversification to become industry leaders in their field. The event was packed with activities that enabled the members to communicate with one another. Activities included in-person workshops, peer-led discussion sessions, and visits to



The event was packed with activities that enabled the members to communicate with one another.



some of the top businesses in Northern Ireland that have been developed and are currently operated by leaders in our rural communities.

Derek Lough (YFCU Chief Executive Officer) expressed his thanks to the six organisations for their support in making the conference a success.



YFC

Hosting

**Interested in hosting a YFCU exchangee?
Scan the QR code to register your interest.**

Hosting can range from taking an exchangee on a day trip to see some of Northern Ireland's iconic tourist sights, to offering them a place to stay, whilst getting to know your friends and family!

"Hosting an exchangee through the YFCU Travel programme is a fantastic way for members to showcase our country, cultures and organisation, and make friends for life whilst doing so".



Natalie Burrows
(Chairperson of
YFCU Travel Committee)



Register here

Scan the QR code above to fill in the form and register your interest



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Please visit www.workplus.app to register your interest

Our Vision
Delivering Excellence through
the **Passion of Our People**



**Northstone Materials Limited -
Committed partners of the YFCU**

UFU AGRI CONFERENCE

YFCU get involved in the Ulster Farmers' Union Conference



"it was a very interesting day to hear from lots of speakers on how they expect farming to look in 2100".

The Young Farmers' Clubs of Ulster (YFCU), in partnership with the Ulster Farmers' Union (UFU) were delighted to hold their Agricultural Conference on Wednesday 22nd January 2025 at the Dunadry Hotel and Gardens in County Antrim. This event, themed 'My Farm 2100: A Glimpse into the Future' gathered over 150 farmers and growers together to look to the future of agriculture.

The event featured an impressive lineup of speakers including Jack Bobo, Rogier Schulte, Chris Elliott, Joe Stanley, and Abi Reader, who discussed topics including food security, sustainability and agricultural innovation. The YFCU Wellbeing & Development Committee were honoured to host a workshop and explain their focus on supporting YFCU members with their mental health and wellbeing. Vice Chairperson of the Committee, Emma Knox (Crumlin YFC) explained that they offer training to members who wish to

become YFSeesYou ambassadors, who volunteer to deliver talks across Northern Ireland and help normalise conversations about mental health and wellbeing within rural communities.

Emma participated in an insightful panel discussion at the end of the conference, discussing the opportunities and challenges facing young people in rural communities across Northern Ireland. "The conference was invaluable as I was able to share the positive work of the YFCU Wellbeing and Development committee with business professionals, farmers and agricultural stakeholders. I discussed our main focus and how those in the audience could provide their support for future campaigns", Emma recalled. "I enjoyed being able to give a Young Farmers' perspective of how farming will change and develop by 2100 and what the Young Farmers of today can bring to the table".

Deputy President of the YFCU, Kristina Fleming, attended the event and delivered the closing speech. "The conference was one of the most energising and positive events I have attended in my time as a YFCU member. I came away from the event feeling refreshed, positive and looking forward to the next 75 years of agriculture".

Vice President of YFCU, Matthew Livingstone (Collone YFC) said "it was a very interesting day to hear from lots of speakers on how they expect farming to look in 2100 and how we can move forward with the changes that lie ahead in agriculture".

The Young Farmers' Clubs of Ulster and the Ulster Farmers' Union were proud to have the support of key sponsors which included Calor Gas, Lightsource BP, NFU Mutual, Kilwaughter Lime, Kingsbridge Healthcare, Solar Power NI, Dunbia, Creagh Concrete and Lantra.



SCOTTISH AGRI TRIP



"It was great to see different systems in operation and seeing how farms have diversified over the years".

Thirty-three members of the Young Farmers' Clubs of Ulster (YFCU) embarked on a two-night trip to Dumfries and Edinburgh to explore Scotland's agriculture. The trip took place from Monday 28th to Wednesday 30th October 2024.

Over the course of the three days, the members visited seven different farms, all very different in the way that they operated. One of the visits was to Omagh native Michael Kyle's New Zealand style dairy farm in Dumfries. They also visited farms that had four Lely robots in operation, had their 150 cows and calves grazing alongside red deer and one farm produces over 35,000 tonnes of homegrown tomatoes to Marks & Spencer every week.

Joyce Allen, member of Moneymore Young Farmers' Club, said "It was

great to see different systems in operation and seeing how farms have diversified over the years. The highlight for me was the livestock on the farms, there were some exceptional show cattle. The main take-home message for me was the reality that farming is changing, and as Young Farmers', we must adapt to these changes. I also enjoyed catching up with members I don't often see, I was one of the five girls on the trip, but we never felt outnumbered as everyone was so good at looking out for one another".

Members commended the hosts along the trip, remarking that their knowledge of their farming systems was incredible. Chairperson of the YFCU Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (AERA) Committee, Mitchell Park, took the leading role on the trip. "One of the highlights

for me was visiting the Whitrigg's Farm in Denholm. Owned by Stuart Mitchell and his Father, they farm organic cattle, deer and arable. I follow Stuart on social media so enjoyed seeing his farm in reality. He took us to a field with 160 cows in it, these cows were on mob and bale grazing, so that was interesting to hear about. All of the hosts had a real passion for farming, and it was great to hear how their new systems increased their profitability".

Richard Beattie, President of the Young Farmers' Clubs of Ulster, thanked the hosts for making the members feel welcome and leaving them going home with increased knowledge of agricultural systems and a clearer understanding of how farming is changing.



Danske Bank

Find out more about the programme and getting in touch with us at

www.danskebank.co.uk/moneysmart

DANSKE BANK:

BUDGETING BASICS

Managing money can be tricky, especially when you're just starting out. Whether saving for something big, covering daily expenses, or planning for the future, budgeting is a key skill to help you become 'money smart'. At Danske Bank, we have a programme called Money Smart, where we visit schools and organisations to teach young people about finances—covering everything from what a bank does and how people earn money to budgeting, loans, and even gaming and gambling. Budgeting is a crucial lesson for everyone, from young kids to those preparing to leave school right through to adults.



Why budgeting matters?

Budgeting might seem boring, but it's essential. Think of it like a map, guiding your financial journey. Without a budget, it's easy to overspend or forget to save for your goals. A good budget helps you manage money coming in (income), track money going out (expenses), and plan for the future, reducing stress. Budgeting isn't just about cutting back—it's about understanding where your money goes so you can make informed choices. It helps keep you on track with your financial goals, whether saving for a new phone, a trip, or long-term dreams like buying a car or building an emergency fund.

Get started with your budget

Creating a budget is simpler than it seems. Here are some easy steps to get you started:

1. Track money in and out

Start by listing all your income—like your job, allowances, or side gigs. Then, note your regular expenses like subscriptions (Spotify, Netflix, gaming), bills (phone, rent, electricity), and costs that can change, like groceries or entertainment. That could look like:

- Money in – £1,500
- Rent – £300
- Netflix – £10
- Spotify – £4.99

2. Set financial goals

Decide what you want to achieve with your money. Are you saving for something specific or building an emergency fund? Clear goals keep you motivated. Start small and build up over time.

3. Create a spending plan

Make sure you're spending less than you earn. You can break down expenses into categories (food, transport, entertainment) and set limits – this helps you see where you might overspend and adjust to stay within your limits. Little spends every day really add up. For example, if you're buying a latte at £3.20 every morning Monday – Friday, that would be a total spend of £64 a month! Which could go to your savings or you could use toward your goals.

4. Monitor and adjust

Life changes, and so should your budget. Regularly check your spending to make sure you're



sticking to your plan. If one area costs more than expected, reassess and make changes.

Tools to help you stay on track

Most banks offer apps to track spending and set up savings pots for specific goals. Other apps focus more on budgeting and can help you list money in and out, or you can jot it down or use your phone notes to keep a track of your plans.

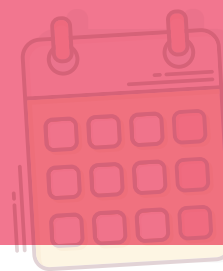
Why Start Now?

Managing money might seem like a future worry, but starting early gives you an advantage. Early budgeting prepares you for unexpected expenses and helps you learn about managing finances. By educating yourself and becoming financially aware, you can build confidence and set yourself up for long-term success. If you'd like a Money Smart session in your school or college, ask your teacher to contact us.





UPCOMING COMPETITIONS & EVENTS *Calendar*



Competition/Event	Details	Date	Location
Ulster Young Farmer	Junior	Monday 10th March 2025	CAFRE: Loughry FT5 & 6
	Senior	Tuesday 18th March 2025	CAFRE: Loughry Recreation Centre
	25-30 Presentations	Tuesday 25th March 2025	CAFRE: Loughry FT5
Dairy Stock Judging, Silage Assessment & Soil Assessment	Down	Monday 31st March 2025	Corrie's Dairy Farm
	Tyrone & Fermanagh	TBC	Clogher Mart
	Armagh	Wednesday 1st April	Markethill Mart
	Londonderry	Wednesday 1st April	TBC
	Antrim	Thursday 3rd April	TBC
Annual General Meeting	All Counties	Friday 11th – Saturday 13th April 2025	Armagh City Hotel
Football	Antrim	Tuesday 15th April 2025	TBC
	Down	Tuesday 15th April 2025	TBC
	Armagh	Wednesday 16th April 2025	Desertmartin FC
	Fermanagh	Wednesday 16th April 2025	Desertmartin FC
	Tyrone	Wednesday 16th April 2025	Desertmartin FC
	Londonderry	Wednesday 16th April 2025	Desertmartin FC
Sheep Shearing		Wednesday 16th May 2025	Balmoral Show
Wool Handling		Wednesday 16th May 2025	Balmoral Show
Football	Final	Thursday 17th May 2025	Balmoral Show
Machinery Handling		Thursday 17th May 2025	Balmoral Show
Tug Of War		Thursday 17th May 2025	Balmoral Show
Build It	All Counties	Wednesday 21st May 2025	TBC
Arable	Final	Tuesday 3rd June 2025	Members' Own Land
Live To Dead: Lamb		Thursday 5th June 2025	Online
Tag Rugby		Tuesday 10th June 2025	TBC
		Wednesday 11th June 2025	TBC
Floral Art Final	Final	Saturday 14th June	
Beef & Sheep Stock Judging	Tyrone & Fermanagh	Monday 16th June 2025	Armagh Show
	Armagh	Tuesday 17th June 2025	Clogher Valley Mart
	Londonderry	Tuesday 17th June 2025	Markethill Mart
	Down	Tuesday 24th June 2025	Downpatrick Mart
	Antrim	Wednesday 25th June 2025	TBC
Tag Rugby	Final	Tuesday 8th July 2025	TBC

COMPETITION ROUND-UP



SWIMMING GALA

The Young Farmers' Club of Ulster (YFCU) successfully hosted their annual Swimming Gala on Saturday 28th September 2024. This event was held in Queen's University Sports Centre (PEC) and ran from 6:30pm to 9:00pm. With a total of 107 members from across Northern Ireland taking part, there was a great level of competition.

Each member had to swim in their heat categories which included U18 Male and Female and Over 18 Male and Female. When all heats had taken place, it was time to move on to the Team Relay where teams were made up of groups of three members and these candidates could have been from different clubs, age categories, and of different gender. When

all team relays took place, the competition moved on to the finals for each category. The top six fastest swimmers in each category successfully went through to the finals. Collone YFC picked up the David Dunlop Cup for the 'Best Overall Club' and lifted the Flamingo Cup for coming first place in the Team Relay section.



Life on the Farm



James Morrison
(Lisbellaw YFC)



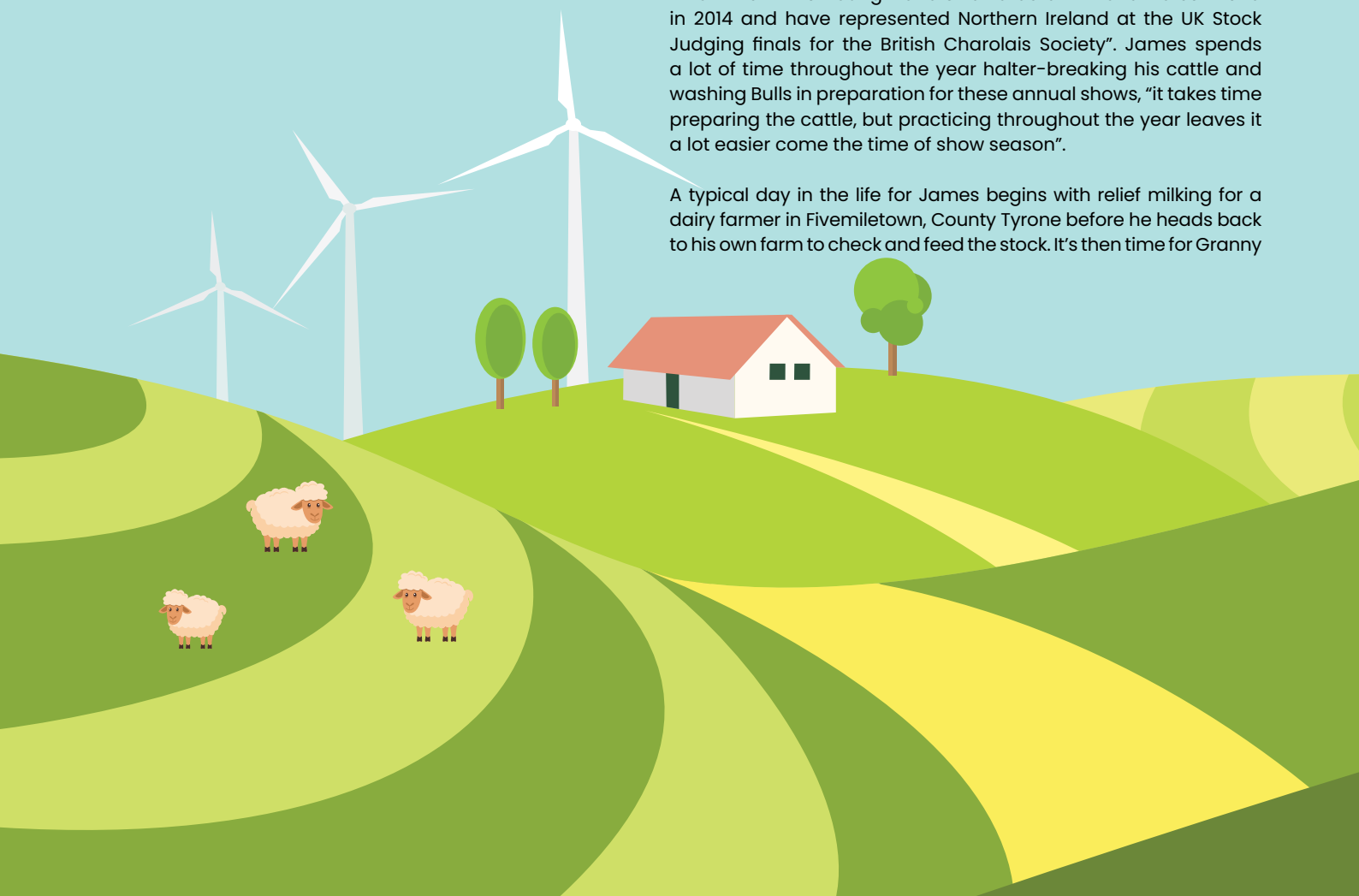
Nineteen-year-old **JAMES MORRISON** from County Fermanagh is not only a keen pedigree Aberdeen Angus breeder, but a dedicated member of Lisbellaw Young Farmers' Club and will be representing the United Kingdom and Ireland at the World Angus Forum in Australia in May.

Looking over the beautiful green countryside of Maguiresbridge in County Fermanagh, James lives and works on his family farm that keeps Pedigree Aberdeen Angus, Pedigree Charolais Cattle, some crossbreds, and a small herd of sheep across 120 acres. James explains, "as any Farmer would say, there's always work to be done, and it's no different for us. We calve all year round and breed Pedigree Bulls for the dairy and suckler markets".

James' success in agriculture comes from being involved in the farm from a young age and most recently has been recognised at UK and Ireland level with the Aberdeen Angus Youth Development Programme, where he was selected for the role of Captain for the UK and Ireland team when they head to Australia in May.

James explains that his Grandfather Edwin and Father Alan have always encouraged him to showcase cattle at agricultural shows. He explains, "I've always enjoyed showcasing cattle at different shows like Balmoral, Clogher Valley, Fermanagh and Omagh County. For many years I was involved in setting up cattle rings at the Fermanagh Show with my Granda. I won the Reserve Breed Championship three times at the Balmoral Show and Female Champion at the Northern Ireland Aberdeen Angus Club Sale. I won First Time Young Handler awards at Fintona Horse Arena in 2014 and have represented Northern Ireland at the UK Stock Judging finals for the British Charolais Society". James spends a lot of time throughout the year halter-breaking his cattle and washing Bulls in preparation for these annual shows, "it takes time preparing the cattle, but practicing throughout the year leaves it a lot easier come the time of show season".

A typical day in the life for James begins with relief milking for a dairy farmer in Fivemiletown, County Tyrone before he heads back to his own farm to check and feed the stock. It's then time for Granny





Morrison's signature bacon, eggs and toast combo served with a hot cup of tea. Returning to the farm a short time later, with the help of Granda Morrison, he begins putting in silage and seeing to other tasks that need to be done, such as fencing, and before too long, it's back to the kitchen for a drop of tea, a chat and a read of the local newspaper. The morning continues

with general farming duties before a hot meal is served at dinner, followed by dessert and then it's straight into halter breaking and preparing Bulls for shows. After the cattle have been seen to and dinner has been served, it's time to head to Young Farmers', band practice, rugby training, or choir. "There's rarely an evening spent in the house", recalls James.

Having been a member of Lisbellaw YFC since 2017, James currently holds the roles of Assistant Club Leader, Junior Coordinator and Vice Chairperson for County Fermanagh. He explains that Young Farmers' has always been a huge part of family life, with his Grandfather Noel Baxter being a Past President and parents meeting through the organisation. James enjoys taking part in different competitions, "I have won several awards in the Stock Judging competition, as well as the Public Speaking, Floral Art and Tag Rugby. That's something I love about the organisation is the variation of competitions offered; it's a great way of learning new skills". With younger sister Evie also a dedicated member, the ten-minute journey to the club hall is made every other Tuesday night.

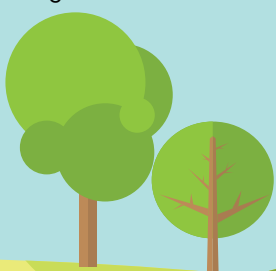
Agriculture was always something James had a fond interest in and stemmed from his involvement on the family farm from he was just three years of age. He is currently studying a full-time course in Sustainable Agriculture with Agri-Business at Greenmount College (CAFRE) and has plans to take this knowledge further in the future and expand the family farm. Whilst Maths and Technology & Design were two of James' biggest interests at school, he was a high achiever all round during his time at Enniskillen Royal Grammar School, holding

the role of Deputy Head Boy in his final year and being an active member of the School Council and Brass Band. Aside from school and farming duties, James has many other interests and is widely involved in the local community. His musical talents shine through singing in the Church Choir with his Father and playing in Maguiresbridge Silver Band, and his sporting interests involve playing in the front row for Clogher Valley Rugby Football Club.

As James prepares to embark on the trip-of-a-lifetime to Australia this Spring, he explains the process of getting chosen to represent the UK and Ireland at the competition. "It consisted of an application form where I had to share my knowledge of livestock and breeding, as well as explain how I would maximise the opportunity to represent my country in Australia. Participants were then narrowed down to just twenty people, and I had to do an intense interview that took place in Scotland. This interview comprised a ten-minute presentation to the judging panel on what the future of the beef industry in Europe would look like. There was a question-and-answer session on topics involving sustainability and production costs and then I had to identify six different cuts of meat and locate them on a carcass. I was honoured to make the top five participants and represent the UK society in Australia".



James' story may hopefully inspire others to consider agriculture as a career and get involved with their local Young Farmers' Club. The Young Farmers' Clubs of Ulster congratulates James on getting chosen to represent the United Kingdom and Ireland at the World Angus Forum in Australia and wishes him a memorable trip and safe travels.



"as any Farmer would say, there's always work to be done".

COMPETITION ROUND-UP



PUBLIC SPEAKING

In Partnership With



The Young Farmers Clubs of Ulster (YFCU), in collaboration with their platinum sponsor, the NFU Mutual Charitable Trust, hosted the finals of their highly anticipated Public Speaking Competition, on Tuesday 29th October 2024.

The event was held in Ballymena Academy and showcased the talents of over 130 YFCU members across Northern Ireland. These members were selected for the finals following the County Heats which seen over 300 participants take part in September and October 2024. Chief Executive Officer of YFCU said "this competition is a testament to the commitment of our members, and of the personal and professional development of young farmers in Northern Ireland". The annual competition serves as a platform for participants to enhance their confidence, public speaking skills, research and preparation abilities, as well as time management.

Competitors chose to compete in either the Prepared or Impromptu sections, with some members participating in

both. For the Prepared section, members chose a particular topic from a set list, supplied in advance of the competition with the aim of adhering to the times set per age category. The topics were "If I was YFCU President I would", "The future of farming in Northern Ireland", "The best invention ever is", "The benefits of YFCU travel opportunities and hosting exchanges", "A letter to past, present or future me", "Empowering women in rural communities", "What will YFCU look like in another 95 years", "Overcoming mental health challenges in rural settings", "If I was to swap lives with someone I would be" and "Benefits of having a cuppa and a catch up".

The four impromptu topics were provided on the evening with 15 – 30 minutes to prepare a speech which had to last over 90 seconds. Lauren Hamilton (NFU Mutual) attended the event and commended all the members, expressing her admiration for the remarkable talent displayed throughout the night.

Guest Speaker at the event was Cynthia Currie, the Interim Director of Education Authority in Northern Ireland. Cynthia commended the breadth of programme and opportunities that YFCU provides,

particularly since the programme is run by members for members providing confidence building, creativity and leadership opportunities for rural youth. She said "the Education Authority continues to value the importance of volunteer led youth work, seeing it as both necessary and highly impactful for young people. As a former member of YFCU she shared how she had experienced first-hand the many benefits that the organisation has to offer and how she continues to be personally grateful for the opportunities it has given her. She commended the members present in getting to the finals of the Public Speaking competition, being successful from among the hundreds of entrants who have competed this year and congratulated the winners.

The Young Farmers Clubs of Ulster would like to extend their heartfelt gratitude to Platinum sponsor NFU Mutual Charitable Trust and all the judges that attended the heats and the final of the annual Public Speaking Competition.

COMPETITION ROUND-UP



CHOIR FESTIVAL

In Partnership With  power ni
Part of Enanga Group

The Young Farmers' Clubs of Ulster (YFCU) recently showcased a range of musical pieces at the association's annual Choir Festival with over two hundred members taking part from ten different clubs across Northern Ireland. The event was held in Whitla Hall, Methodist College, Belfast on Friday 6th December 2024. This well-loved competition was kindly sponsored once again by Platinum Sponsor and Sustainability Partner, Power NI.

The competition saw entries from ten Young Farmers Clubs which were Coleraine YFC, Collone YFC, Crumlin YFC, Curragh YFC, Holestone YFC, Kilraughts YFC, Lisnamurrigan YFC, Moneymore YFC, Moycraig YFC and Trillick & District YFC. The event did not just see a fantastic turnout in choirs but also spectators, who came down

to support YFCU members on a wet and stormy night. John Trueman kindly adjudicated the event and guest speaker was Tina McVeigh, Director of the Belfast School of Performing Arts. John and Tina both gave the participating choirs the benefit of their expertise by relating some constructive and encouraging advice on their performances.

The award for 'Best Solo' went to Oliver John O'Hara (Moycraig YFC), 'Best Choral Piece' went to Moneymore YFC, 'Best Accompaniment' was awarded to Edward McKendry (Lisnamurrigan YFC) and the 'Best Newcomer' award was presented to Lisnamurrigan YFC. For the 'Best Overall' awards, Curragh YFC came third place, Moneymore YFC were presented second place and Coleraine YFC were awarded first place for the second year in a row.

Richard Beattie, YFCU President quoted; "The choir festival was a great success, the clubs that took part put a lot of hard work and effort into their performances which really showed on the night. It certainly got everyone in the festive spirit."

Amy Bennington, Marketing Manager from YFCU Platinum Sponsor & Sustainability Partner, Power NI, said: "Power NI is delighted to be back again to support the YFCU Choir Festival for another year- it's always a joyful, festive event to be a part of. Well done to all the clubs that entered, it was great to see so many from across NI taking part, and a huge congratulations to winners Coleraine Young Farmers Club on another win, two years in a row!"



COMPETITION ROUND-UP



BOWLING

In Partnership With  **Hyperfast NI**
IMPROVING RURAL CONNECTIVITY



The Young Farmers Clubs of Ulster (YFCU) held their annual Bowling competition on Monday 13th January 2025 at the Dundonald Ice Bowl outside Belfast and Brunswick Moviebowl in Londonderry. Proudly sponsored by Hyperfast NI, this competition brought together 180 members from across Northern Ireland for an evening of friendly competition.

The Dundonald Ice Bowl played host to the teams from Counties Antrim, Armagh, and Down, while Brunswick Moviebowl welcomed competitors from Counties Fermanagh, Londonderry and Tyrone. Each team representing their respective counties, battled it out with passion and skill, making the YFCU Bowling Competition a resounding success. Collone Young Farmers' Club (YFC) claimed first prize with Annaclone & Magherally

YFC awarded second place and Cookstown YFC awarded third place.

Hyperfast NI, home for information on the delivery of Project Stratum, proudly sponsor this annual event, reinforcing their commitment to supporting local communities and youth initiatives. Project Stratum is a government investment of £165m by the Department for the Economy (DfE) and the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) to revolutionize connectivity in rural areas by extending gigabit-capable full fibre broadband infrastructure to approximately 85,000 homes and businesses across Northern Ireland.

Stephen McCartney (Events & Fibre Ambassador Manager at Hyperfast NI), expressed the company's delight in supporting the YFCU Bowling

Competition. "Hyperfast NI were delighted to come on board as a sponsor of the Young Farmers' Clubs of Ulster for the second year in a row. We are proud to be supporting the next generation of the farming community as we continue to bridge the digital divide and bring better connectivity to rural areas."

The Youth Farmers' Clubs of Ulster expresses its gratitude to Hyperfast NI for their generous support, making the YFCU Bowling Competition an unforgettable experience for all involved. As the competition continues to grow in popularity, the YFCU looks forward to future collaborations that promote the well-being and development of rural youth in Northern Ireland.

COMPETITION ROUND-UP



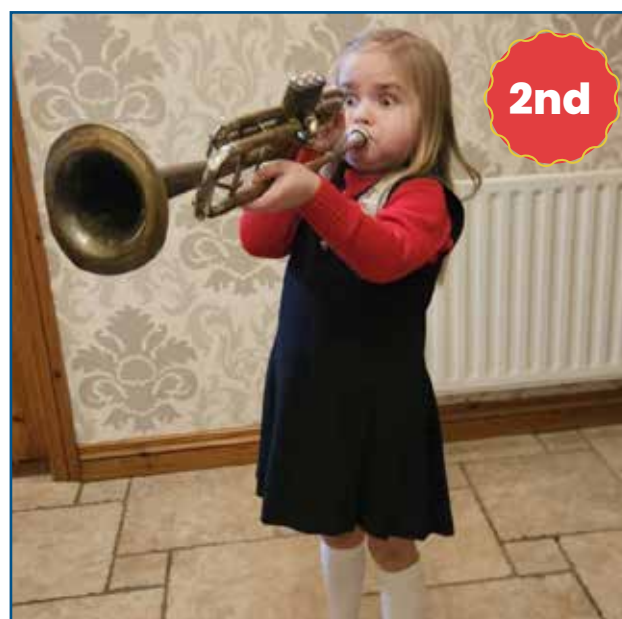
PHOTOGRAPHY

The annual YFCU Digital Photography competition seen over 150 members from clubs across Northern Ireland, take part in a big to claim the winning prizes. The theme was 'Celebration & Fun', which complimented the YFCU celebrating their 95th Anniversary and President Richard Beattie's theme for the year which is FUN as an acronym for Friendships, Unites and Next Generation.

Participants were asked to capture celebrations and fun moments throughout the year, showing how YFCU members work together to create the best experiences for each other. All photographs were showcased at the annual NI Quiz on Friday 17th January 2025 at Laurelhill Community College, Lisburn and winners were announced. The photos were judged by professional photographer David Scott, who has

many years of experience in capturing happy moments on camera. David Scott said, "I was most impressed by the level of skill shown by members in displaying their own interpretation of the theme".

Beth McCaw (Killinchy YFC) won first prize, with Rachel Nicholl (Moneymore YFC) winning second prize and Jill Brownlee (Bleary YFC) winning third prize.



COMPETITION ROUND-UP



NI QUIZ

The YFCU NI Quiz took place on Friday 17th January 2025 at Laurelhill Community College in Lisburn with over twenty teams taking part. The top three teams were Rathfriland YFC in first place, Clanabogan YFC in second place and Lisnamurrigan YFC in third place.



All teams consisted of four members, of which at least one member was aged 12-17. The quiz consisted of ten themed rounds, which included General Knowledge, Movies & TV Shows, Music, Food & Drink, Around The World, Northern Ireland, World Agriculture, Animals, YFCU, Sport and five questions at the end for a tie breaker.

NEW PARTNERSHIP WITH SONI



YFCU are delighted to announce their new partnership with SONI Limited. Senior Landowner Engagement Lead at SONI, William Sufferin, said "In recent years, SONI have continued to introduce and invest in new

approaches to engagement across Northern Ireland. As we work to deliver a power system for the future, we understand that young people must have a voice in our decision-making processes for upgrading Northern Ireland's electricity grid as we move toward a carbon-free power system. Working closely with the Young Farmers' Clubs of Ulster (YFCU) will provide our landowner and community engagement teams with the opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of some of the challenges the sector faces through the first-hand experiences of the next generation of farmers. SONI is proud to be a platinum partner of YFCU. This partnership is about fostering strong

connections between SONI and the farming community in the time ahead. We recognise how instrumental the farming community is to Northern Ireland's energy transition, and we welcome the opportunity to play our part by helping to invest in the future of farming through supporting YFCU."





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AHOGHILL



Ahoghill YFC began their Winter programme by welcoming new members through the door. Catherine Chesney gained first place in her age category for the Live to Dead competition and Annie Wylie gained first place in her age category for County Antrim Public Speaking heats. In November, past and present members showed their support at the Ballymena Show Annual Dinner and participated in the annual County Quiz, with their senior team placing second. The annual Christmas Fair was bigger than ever with over forty stall holders attending on the day and as a result of all fundraising efforts throughout 2024, over £4000 was raised for Air Ambulance Northern Ireland and Tiny Life. January saw the newest committee members being appointed and members travelled to Corick House Hotel to celebrate 95 years of YFCU. Judith Gillespie and Sarah Chesney both made it through to the finals of the Demonstration Presentation competition. The club looks forward to working with Antrim Area Hospital Renal Unit and Aplastic Anaemia Trust as their chosen charities for 2025.

ANNACLONE & MAGHERALLY



Annacloy & Magherally YFC enjoyed a busy October programme, with a fascinating talk from local Vet, Marcus White, a spooky trip to Fitzpatrick's Scare Trail and celebrating members that excelled in the County Down Floral Art heats. Members also enjoyed a night at the County Down Dinner and their own 80th Anniversary celebrations. They hosted Lylehill YFC for the first leg of the exchange and Lylehill YFC then returned the offer hosting Annacloy & Magherally YFC months later. Members also made the trip to the Friendship Four ice hockey tournament, a very entertaining night. Zoe Weir presented to the members of the club about her time at the Rural Youth Europe European Rally in Estonia during the Summer and new members were elected on to the committee at the annual AGM.

ARTANA



Artana YFC enjoyed their annual night out to the St Trinian's event which was held in the Bannville Hotel in Banbridge, all tickets were sold out and the feedback from attendees was positive. Members from Artana YFC enjoyed taking part in numerous competitions which included the Bowling (sponsored by Hyperfast NI). The club renewed their first aid knowledge with a CPR training and enjoyed a visit to SlurryQuip for a tour which members found very interesting getting to see the variety of equipment that they produce for farmers.

BALLYWALTER



Ballywalter YFC enjoyed a Farm Safety talk by YFCU Farm Safety Mentor Emma Knox from Crumlin YFC, and members said it was very informative as it reminded them of the importance of keeping safe on the farm every day. The club participated in different competitions which included the Swimming Gala at Queen's University where Lauren Taylor came first place in her age category and the Ballywalter YFC relay team came second place in their heat. Also in the line of competitions, sixteen members travelled to Dromore High School to take part in the Public Speaking heats (sponsored by NFU Mutual Charitable Trust) and thirteen members took part in the Floral Art heats (sponsored by Power NI). Robyn Orr, Oliver Patton, Lauren Taylor and Eirinn Braniff all progressed to the final stage of the competition and lifted awards in their age categories. Some members went along on the Scottish Agri Trip and then swapped the wellington boots for smart attire when they attended the County Down Dinner in the Bannville Hotel, Banbridge. The exchange trip to Dumfries and Galloaway with Lower Nithsdale YFC was a highlight of the season with thirteen members embarking on the trip.



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BLEARY



Bleary YFC held their first quiz night on Friday 25th October 2024 in The Park Inn, with over £1,050 raised for the club funds and a fully packed room. The club continued their fundraising efforts by joining with St Mark's Church in Portadown for the Christmas Tractor Run and holding their first Soup Lunch with over £400 being raised for Alzheimer's and club funds. Bleary YFC were actively involved in the competitions throughout the season with four dedicated club members travelling to Ballymena Academy for the final of the Public Speaking competition (sponsored by NFU Mutual Charitable Trust) where Sarah Ruddell won second place in her age category. The County Armagh Dinner Dance was a highlight of the season, and the night was made with Bleary YFC winning numerous awards. Helen Laird attended the Oxford Farming Conference (supported by the Irish Farmers' Journal and the Thomas Henry Foundation) and Amy Ritchie attended the Ulster Farmers' Union & YFCU Agriculture Conference at the Dunadry Hotel in Templepatrick. Amy enjoyed having the opportunity to speak to attendees at a workshop on behalf of the YFCU Wellbeing and Development Committee.

CAPPAGH



Members of Cappagh YFC took part in the heats of the Public Speaking (sponsored by NFU Mutual Charitable Trust) and Group Debating competitions which took place at Omagh Academy and the Floral Art heats (sponsored by Power NI) which took place at CAFRE Loughry Campus. Some highlights of the season was the Zumba night in the hall, the annual County Tyrone dinner in the Silverbirch Hotel and a trip to Duke's Ice Cream shop where members enjoyed a behind-the-scenes tour of the ice cream making process. Natalie Burrows and Matthew Wilson travelled to Crawfordsburn Scout Centre to take part in the 5 Nations Conference where they enjoyed meeting up with members of YFC clubs across Ireland, England, Scotland and Wales. The table quiz fundraiser was a great success and despite the weather conditions, attracted a great crowd of people. Other highlights of the season included an educational talk from Ross at RJ Woodland Services, a Christmas Craft Fair in the hall with ten businesses showcasing their products, a trip to a Belfast Giants ice hockey game before Christmas and a trip to Brunswick Moviebowl to take part in the YFCU bowling competition (sponsored by Hyperfast NI).

CASTLECAULFIELD



Castlecaulfield YFC enjoyed taking part in the YFCU Public Speaking competition where they celebrated Sarah Hunter and Chloe Davison receiving first place in their age category. They also took part in the Floral Art competition held at CAFRE Loughry Campus. Highlights of the season included a visit to Moy Park where members enjoyed an insight into the behind the scenes of the poultry industry, a night out at the County Tyrone Dinner in the Silverbirch Hotel and hosting Artana YFC for a fun-filled night of games. Chloe Jamison from Moycraig YFC gave a presentation on Mental Health one night and then Andrew provided a talk on Farm Theory. Members travelled to Belfast to see the Belfast Giants match in the SSE Arena and Air Ambulance Northern Ireland travelled to the club hall to be presented with a cheque with the proceeds from the tractor run fundraiser in September.

COLLONE



Winter proved to be a busy season for Collone YFC, with no shortage of opportunities to get dressed up. On Saturday 2nd November 2024, members headed to the Down Royal racecourse for the annual Ladies' Day competition and horse racing, where a fantastic day was had by all. Only one week later, past and present members were suited and booted once again as they headed to the Belmont House Hotel to celebrate their 80th anniversary. CEO of Fane Valley, Trevor Lockhart attended the event as guest speaker and congratulated the club on their achievements to date. At this event, the charity auction and raffle also raised a tremendous amount of over £6,900 to add to the end-of-year total for the club's

chosen charity, Brainwaves NI. Collone YFC hosted another sold-out Boilersuit party at the Bannville Hotel featuring DJ Johnny O'Neill and Clubland DJ N-Force, another highlight of the year for many. The Annual county Dinner took place on the 15th of November which saw the return of the Miss Armagh competition, a huge congratulations must go to member Karen Walker who was the first person to be awarded this title.



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CRUMLIN



Crumlin YFC enjoyed a night at Scrapyard Golf in Newtownabbey. County Antrim Public Speaking heats was up next and then senior members got suited and booted for the annual County Dinner, Emma Knox being awarded first place in Dairy Stock Judging. Emma Knox and Grace Cotton represented the club at the YFCU 5 Nations Conference in Bangor. The 'Crumlin Goes Country' junior social with entertainment by Stephen Maginnis was a great success! The club exchange night with Hillhall YFC was an evening of jiving and line dancing led by Joanna Donnelly and James O'Rourke. 50 Members enjoyed an evening at Redhouse Holsteins. To end the busy month some members headed to Glaryford Farmers' Hall to celebrate 95 years of the YFCU, where Grace Cotton read a poem on thanksgiving. December was busy beginning with a festive tour around the McCorry's Christmas Tree Farm. Another out meeting to Airtastic in Newtownabbey where members loved a bouncy evening to blow off some steam! The Presidents

Appeal was carried out with members collecting food items for the local foodbank. Members headed for an exciting farm-style fitness session from Farm Fox Training and to Dundonald Ice bowl for the annual 10 Pin Bowling.

CURRAGH



Curragh Young Farmers have had an incredibly busy and successful few months filled with achievements, community events and fundraising efforts. Their hard work and dedication were evident as they secured an impressive 3rd place in the highly competitive Choir Festival, showcasing their talent and teamwork. Members also attended the annual County Londonderry Dinner Dance and Prizegiving, where their commitment and contribution at county level was recognised and rewarded, a proud club moment. In addition to their competitive successes, the club hosted their highly anticipated annual table quiz, which attracted a fantastic turnout. The event was a great evening of fun and competition. One of the most significant events of the past few months for Curragh was their well-supported Charity Tractor Run, which saw an incredible response from members and the local community. Through their efforts they raised over £2000, which has gone towards the purchasing and installation of a defibrillator for the Curragh Hall – an invaluable addition that could save lives in the local area. The Curragh Hall is not only used by the Young Farmers but by the whole surrounding community and development association.

DERG VALLEY



Derg Valley Young Farmers began the winter term with a trip to Hill Valley Driving Range to put our swings to the test! While some members proved better than others, a great evening was had by all. We then attend the annual County Dinner in the Silverbirch Hotel. Next on the programme was our Halloween outing to Fright Night at Jungle NI. We then had our 'Keep Fit' meeting in the hall with a Zumba class from Leanne. Next on the agenda was our annual trip to Kingspan to watch an ULSTER vs LEINSTER rugby match. Our next meeting was 'Farm Safety', Jane came to spread awareness of dangers on the farm, we then got the opportunity to act out scenarios to become more aware of farm safety! To finish off a year of competitions, fun and success we had our Christmas dinner in The Derg Arms which was well attended. We began the new year with our AGM and finished the evening with pizza and games in the hall. For our junior's choice meeting, we headed to AIRTASTIC in Lisburn for fun and games, the juniors greatly enjoyed this meeting!

DONAGHADEE



In October, Donaghadee YFC met twice, first a night at Dundonald Ice Bowl for some Ice Skating and Bowling, and a fire safety talk. Also in October, some members from the club competed in competitions including Public Speaking, where 3 members made it to the NI Finals, and in the Floral Art Heats. In November, Donaghadee members traded their boots for suits and headed to County Down's County Dinner, bringing home an impressive amount of silverware. Donaghadee YFC also met for a 90 question quiz in honour of their upcoming 90th Anniversary. They attended a veterinary talk at Jubilee Vets too. The club also saw success at the Group Debating heats, with two teams making it to the finals and one team placing 3rd there. Into December, the club held a Christmas Movie Night, as well as their Annual Christmas Dinner and Awards Night. The Club also held a brand new event- the Festive Tractor Dress Up and Run, which saw many vehicles get lit for charity. To start the new year, the Club elected their new committee at the AGM and Dutch Auction, followed by a night at Eddie Irvine Sports for an hour of football.



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DUNGIVEN



Dungiven YFC had a busy October with having YF sees you talk and pizza meeting, public speaking heats to floral art competition, Dungiven YFC held their Halloween 'I Scream' meeting over in The Jungle NI, Moneymore were members attended for the Fright night, members got two tokens each to experience two of the 6 scare attractions. All of Dungiven YFC members had a thrilling evening out. November seen members take part in the home management heats and also attending the County Londonderry dinner dance. Some members were presented with awards and celebrated their success with other neighbouring clubs and danced the night away. Dungiven YFC headed to the millennium forum, Londonderry in December for their Christmas trip to see the Pantomime Aladdin,

members really got into the Christmas spirit and enjoyed the craic. The New Year seen Dungiven YFC hold their AGM & pudding party were committee organised some delicious deserts for everyone to try. The last meeting of January was a trip ice skating to Dundonald ice bowl, with some members being better on their feet than others, a few bruised knees later members got the hang of it and were flying round the ice rink before returning home.

FINVOY



Finvoy YFC kick started competitions with Public Speaking, congratulating Jessica Mellet who came first in the 16-18 impromptu and Richard Beattie who came 3rd in 25-30 impromptu. Floral Art seen Jamie Shaw come first in the 14-16 heats. Many outings took place to celebrate Halloween and Christmas. Members of Finvoy YFC hosted the first leg of the Scottish exchange, as they welcomed members from SSS YFC. They had a busy weekend full of farm tours and a bus tour of the Glenn's. Members are looking forward to the return to Scotland in February. Finvoy YFC members are working hard toward the famous Arts Festival Competition and are looking forward to showing off the talents within Finvoy.

GARVAGH



Garvagh YFC members competed in Public Speaking, with Ellen McFetridge and Erica Savoury placing in their age groups, the night was successful for our club. On the 21st of October a group of members travelled to Rainey Endowed school, Magherafelt to compete in the Floral Art heats, Ellen McFetridge placed 1st in 16-18 age group, along with Charlotte Moon placing 2nd and Megan Christie placing 1st in 18-21 age group. Garvagh YFC attended the County Londonderry Dinner Dance and prize giving in Roe Park Resort. Through December, Garvagh YFC took part in the community Garvagh Christmas tree light switch on. Our members took turns at our club's stall, where the members of the community and upcoming new members got the chance to play a fun game, earning points to get a prize from our basket. Overall, it was a good nights fun and many smiles were left on everyone's faces! Garvagh YFC travelled to Prison Island in Belfast for one of their club meetings during December. Our members took off through each prison room, completing each of the challenging activities to earn points for their team's overall score. It was an entertaining night of good craic and lots of laughter.

GLARRYFORD



November started off with 4 teams placing in the group debating heats to then go on to place again in the finals. We then celebrated our club dinner at Leighmour house where we had a great night with prizes being presented. Our last club meeting of 2024 was a trip to the Belfast giants which was a highlight for everyone involved. We held our annual tractor run which received a lot of support from our local community, as-well as the tractor run we held a kids race and tea for everyone to get involved. To start of the new year we held a top launch night where celebrated our new tops and welcomed our new sponsors Magheramourne estate, GMG E-Farm and Pro-form nutrition. Our first club meeting for 2025 was our AGM where we said goodbye to any out going committee members and welcomed a new committee for the year ahead, Glarryford has a very exciting year ahead.

CLUB NEWS CLUB NEWS CLUB NEWS

GLENO VALLEY



It's been a busy couple of months for Gleno Valley YFC! October kicked off with some senior members heading to tullyglass for the annual County Dinner, a great evening was had with some prizes being picked up along the way! Floral art heats were a success with Ruby Robinson placing 2nd in the 12-14 age category and Lauren Wilson placing 1st in 18-21. To round off October we set off on a committee daytrip to celebrate the dedication that all committee members show towards our club! November was a big month for Gleno Valley as we held our 90th Anniversary Dinner at Magheramorne Estate. It was great to have so many past, present and future members come along to appreciate this fantastic milestone. November also saw our Annual Fatstock Show and Sale- this is one of our most successful events throughout the year to raise funds for our chosen charity Cardiac Risk in the Young (CRY). To start off January members headed to the Grand Opera House to enjoy a night watching Peter Pan at the Pantomime. We look forward to our exciting upcoming surprises to finish off our 90th year!

HILLHALL



Firstly as a club we would like to congratulate our club secretary Brian Wade and our club PRO Rebekah Wade on the birth of their daughter Sienna, we hope she will join the club in later years. We continued to join our winter programme with our annual pumpkin carving night, a trip to the panto and our christmas party. The club had our agm in January and would like to thank outgoing members for their hard work and dedication to the club.

HILLSBOROUGH



It has been a busy winter period for Hillsborough YFC, starting with their visit to Craighall Farm in Antrim - everyone enjoyed the tour and they also received helpful stock-judging tips. On 26th October, HYFC held their Quiz Night in the Pheasant, Annahilt - the committee would like to thank all those who supported this. November saw members head to Aunt Sandra's Candy Factory, they also welcomed Robert Irvine who led an 'in' meeting for a night of jiving. Members travelled to meet with Bleary Young Farmers on 29th November, a great night was had by everyone and HYFC look forward to hosting the return leg of the exchange. In December, members headed to SlurryKat for a very informative factory tour. The following week, senior members had their annual night out in Belfast with a visit to the Christmas markets and a game of Bingo Loco. For their last

meeting of 2024, members enjoyed a travel talk from Glyn Surgenor followed by pizza. On 22nd January we held our AGM followed by a visit from our local UFU representative. The club wishes incoming committee members every success for the year ahead!

HOLESTONE



It's been a busy couple of months for the members of Holestone Young Farmers! October saw some of our members head to Jungle NI for some scary Halloween fun. A great night was had by all, even though the screams from some of the members may say different! In November, we held our annual Night at the Races in the Five Corners Bar. We had some great prizes auctioned off and everyone enjoyed the night. December was also a busy month for Holestone as we held our annual Christmas Carol Service, where everyone came along to sing some carols and get into the festive spirit just in time for Christmas! Our final event of the year was our Christmas Party at Secrets Nightclub, Magherafelt. There was a great turnout and everyone enjoyed themselves, what a perfect way to end the year!



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KELLS & CONNOR



Kells & Connor celebrated its 65th Anniversary this year, and what a night it was! To mark this special occasion, we held a fantastic anniversary dinner at the Ross Park Hotel in Kells on the 12th of November 2024. It was an amazing chance for past and current members, along with their families and friends, to come together and celebrate the club's history. Everyone enjoyed a great meal, with plenty of time to catch up, share memories, and laugh about old times. It was a night full of good food, great company, and lots of fun. After dinner, the night really kicked off with music from Colin Graham. The dance floor was packed as everyone danced the night away, celebrating 65 years of the club's achievements and the incredible friendships and relationships its helped create. The evening was a perfect mix of nostalgia, joy, and looking forward to what the future holds for the club. During the past few months members have also enjoyed a host of meeting and competitions and the club looks forward to see what the next couple of months bring!

KILLINCHY



In October 2024, the first meeting of the month, Killinchy YFC took a bus trip to Craigavon dry slopes for a fun-filled night of snow tubing! On the way home, we stopped at McDonald's. With Halloween approaching, each member had the opportunity to carve their own pumpkin, and prizes were available for the best-carved designs. November came around quickly, and a handful of members visited Roy Lyttle Ltd to have a look around their amazing production lines and machinery. Senior night out is always a big hit for Killinchy! Dinner in The Auld House Moneyrea and bus into Belfast for an eventful evening! December, Jubilee Veterinary centre welcomed us in for a tour of their facilities! Christmas shopping in Belfast is always a big hit for our members! They got the chance to get their presents for loved ones- very last minute! With Christmas over us and new year began, killinchy

brought back the trip to the Panto! Peter Pan was a superior performance. Oh no they did not, oh yes, they did! To finish January our annual AGM was had. It is great to see new, young, and eager members be interested!

LISNAMURRICAN



Lisnamurrican have continued to be busy in the Autumn/Winter months whilst enjoying a great Christmas and New Year break! Club meetings continued with a trip to the escape rooms, home management competition, talk from the PSNI and split meeting with the girls doing some painting and the boys going to a blacksmith workshop. More festive meetings included our roving supper and trip to the pantomime at the Grand Opera House. Our last meeting was our AGM where we voted in our committee for the 2025/2026 year. Members have been busy taking part and winning prizes in a range of competitions including floral art, group debating, choir festival and the County Antrim Quiz. Many members were also rewarded for their hard work throughout the year by receiving awards at the County Antrim dinner dance in Tullyglass Hotel.

The club have been busy organising events including a great night in Kelly's, our Club Dinner in the Bushtown Hotel and Charity Truck and Tractor Run in aid of Alzheimer's NI. We have also helped out at the switching on of the Christmas lights in Broughshane and at a charity tractor run in memory of Andrew Logan.

LYLEHILL



Lylehill YFC began October with a scavenger hunt, where our members' creativity shone—some of the items brought back were truly unexpected! We then held an insightful rural crime talk with local police, learning valuable ways to protect our property. Later, we partnered with a local primary school to host a charity cycle shear competition, raising an impressive amount for a great cause. October wrapped up with our annual Halloween walk, where members braved the eerie countryside. November was quieter, with members traveling to Annaclone and Magherally Young Farmers Club for the first half of our exchange. December kicked off with our Home Management Competition, showcasing incredible talent. One of the month's highlights was our roving supper—huge thanks to our generous hosts for the amazing food! We ended the year with a senior night out, pub crawling to Portrush for a fantastic evening. January started with our annual trip to the panto to see Peter Pan at the Opera House. We then hosted Annaclone and Magherally for the second half of our exchange, strengthening friendships. The month concluded with our AGM, committee meetings, choir practices, and preparations for our 95th Anniversary Dinner in February.

CLUB NEWS CLUB NEWS CLUB NEWS

MONEYMORE



To start October they crafted bird houses using old pallets as part of their new sustainability pledge and have now installed these in the local area. Later in the month, they had their annual Quiz night which had a great attendance and great questions! Winners won Dairy Milk bars, Yummy! After a Floral Arts practice, they donated the arrangements members created to Nursing homes in the mid-Ulster community as a way of giving back. In December the club hosted their Annual Choir festival serving a great array tea and buns which raised £464! They also supported local Church parish Ballinderry by performing their Choir festival songs. During same month members united with Coleraine YFC for a fun senior night out in Omagh. Some great dancing on display! In 2025 a breakfast fundraiser was held that included real tasty food, going from a stacked fruit bar to different breakfast baps. The morning gave locals the chance to enjoy some great food, have a cup of tea and chat with everyone. It raised an impressive £1291, which can be used for Club funds! Moneymore YFC will continue to carry out their sustainability initiatives within in next few months!

NEWTOWNARDS



In October, Newtownards Young Farmers commenced with a home management competition, where members enthusiastically engaged in various tasks. The evening concluded with members working towards the sustainability pledge. The month of October culminated in a Halloween night, during which members enjoyed carving pumpkins. The creations were impressive, and the leftover materials were utilized to craft bird feeders, which were then hung around the club hall to attract birds. In early November, members travelled to the Bannville for the County dinner, which was a great success, with County silverware returning to Newtownards. Club member Rebecca McBratney delivered an informative talk on farm safety, which was well-received by the members. December saw members embarking on a trip to the SSE to watch the Giants play. In January, members visited the Dundonald Ice Bowl for a night of bowling, revealing some hidden talents among the members. The final meeting of the new year was the AGM and Dutch auction. All outgoing office bearers were thanked for their contributions over the year. After filling all positions, the Dutch auction took place, with several good items finding new homes.

NEWTOWNHAMILTON



It's been an action-packed last few months here at Newtownhamilton YFC with lots of fun filled meetings including a visit from the Northern Ireland Ambulance service, where our members learn a vital skill in CPR! We also hosted a sports night at Newtownhamilton High School where we let the competitive side show during some hockey and dodgeball! We also held an abundance of meetings including, paintballing at the mill in Bleary and a movie night! We recently our annual AGM Where our members voted for some fresh faces to lead us into 2025!

RANDALSTOWN



Our 65th Anniversary year has been a memorable one, marked by numerous exciting events. On October 19th, we hosted a successful Tractor and Truck Run, welcoming 60 vehicles and raising £3,455.25 for the Royal Victoria Hospital for Sick Children. We were also thrilled to raise £2011 for the same charity at our annual Club Dinner and Prize Giving at the Tullyglass House Hotel, bringing home several prizes! Our winter programme has been packed with activities, including a talk on sustainability and social media from Andrew Wright of Farm Theory. We've also enjoyed a trip to Prison Island Escape Rooms and the Pantomime, as well as a roving supper, where 36 members took to the roads for some good grub. Competitions have also been a highlight, with several members achieving county-level success and securing spots in Northern Ireland finals across events including floral art and public speaking. Finally, we recently held our AGM, where a new committee was voted in for the upcoming year. A big thank you to our outgoing committee, and best of luck to those stepping up!



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RATHFRILAND



Rathfriland YFC have had an extremely busy Winter programme with our 80th Anniversary Dinner being one of the highlights! The beginning of the year saw meetings, competitions, and nights out in full swing. With around 60 members regularly attending meetings, members enjoyed a variety of activities including Jiving & Dancing, Fright Night, Fire Station Talk, Exchange and trips to ice hockey and bowling! Over the Winter Programme, members took part in many competitions, with great success. Senior members worked hard behind the scenes preparing for the 80th Anniversary Dinner which took place on Saturday 19th October. It was great to see past and present members, family and friends get together to catch up and share memories of the clubs' success. In November, the Senior Members enjoyed a night out at the County Dinner, hosted at The Bannville Hotel. Congratulations to the prize winners! Club members Anna & Jack McCready also attended the YFCU Agri Trip to Scotland. Fundraising for our chosen charities was continuous

with our Quiz Night, Christmas Tree Festival, Carols by Candlelight Service and Tractor Run proving a huge success. The Club are looking forward to another successful year of Rathfriland YFC!

SESKINORE



Seskinore YFC held their steak bbq in Clarke's bar and saw many members and past members through the door for a night of great food and entertainment. The county dinner saw great success for the club with 30 members attending with a table of silverware and winning the "Superclub" plate. We had many club meetings to follow, including a butchery demonstration, travel information night on the opportunities to travel within the YFCU and an informative and entertaining trip to Omagh Fire and Rescue Service, this was a great evening, and members gained an insight into safety measures on the farm. Our annual Tractor and Lorry run alongside the light switch on in Seskinore and saw over 120 tractors with amazing Christmas decorations travel through the town led by Santa Claus himself, followed by switching on the Christmas tree lights and gifts from Santa in his grotto, this was a great night of fun for all ages within the Seskinore and wider community. As we enter our 80th year from the club was formed we are looking forward to a jam-packed year of activities and events including our anniversary dinner in Corick House Hotel and Spa.

SPA



Spa YFC's first club meeting in October saw 60 members in attendance to hear from Ross from NI Ambulance Service and Catherine from Rural Support learning life-saving skills. On Sunday 13th October SPA YFC took part in Magherahamlet Presbyterian Harvest Service. On Tuesday 16th October 18 members headed to Dromore High School to take part in County Down floral art heats. On Tuesday 22nd November over 50 Members headed off to commence their Halloween Celebrations at Streamvale Farm! Everyone had great fun with lots to offer from the Haunted House to Pumpkin picking and carving. On Saturday 2nd November members attended the County Down annual County Dinner. In November, the Royal Ulster Beef and Lamb 2024 took place with Martin Rodgers receiving reserve champion in the YFCU class. Tuesday 3rd December over 80 members headed to the Grand Opera House to watch Peter Pan. On Wed 10th January everyone battled the cold weather at McKelvey Brothers farm, a night packed with information regarding their beef unit, contracting business and farm shop.

STRABANE



Now with things well under way, Strabane welcomed "William Sawyers" who gave us insight to his personal story which highlighted the importance of safety protocols on the farm. For Halloween we embraced spooky fun at the "Legacurry pumpkin patch" for a frightening experience. In November we were welcomed by "Andrew Wright" or better known as "Farm theory" as we were taken around his farm we gained a deeper understanding of his business which included his milking herd, agri technology and his social media platforms a really fun interesting evening was enjoyed by everyone. Together with farmers union we held our annual quiz in December with a strong turnout battling for first prize. We also had a Christmas trip to Brunswick SuperBowl where the members had a good opportunity to show off their skills.

CLUB NEWS CLUB NEWS CLUB NEWS

STRAID



At the start of October, Felicity McConnell and Alexander Boyd won 3rd place with their impressive speeches in the public speaking competition. Our first out meeting was to laser tag. Straid YFC picked up multiple prizes from County Antrim Superclub to Junior Tag Rugby winners at County dinner. Floral art was next on the calendar and our members assembled their masterpieces with Charlotte Moore placing 2nd. At the end of October, members pledged to be "Social, Supportive and Smart" as Straid takes on a sustainable approach to young farmers. Two teams took part in the County Quiz with our senior members taking 3rd place. We had an exchange night with Ballywalter YFC where members danced the night

away. The start of December meant it was time for the best meeting of the year: our roving supper. 60 members enjoyed great food and great company. Our last meeting of 2024 took the form of ice skating. A few bruises, some sore backs, and a lot of laughter—exactly what you want from your last meeting of the year.

THE GLENS



The Glens are off to a flying start this year. From talks on looking after our well-being from the inspiring Tara at Behind the Rainbow, to celebrating members success, as our member Daniel won his class at the 80th Annual Horse Ploughing Championships at Gilford. Not only did our seniors take part in the county quiz, but we also hosted our own first pub quiz for our members. Our members were kindly hosted by the Ballycastle Fire station and we all found the tour fun and very informative. For our Christmas meeting we made and decorated our very own snowmen and we even hosted a Christmas giveaway on our social media. Most recently we hosted the folks from Party Animals NI, and our members got up close and personal with all manner of exotic animals from snakes to chinchilla's and we got to find out which of our members would survive if stranded in the jungle. As a club we are looking forward to what the rest of the year has in store and of course our annual fun night in the summer which is sure to bring about a few laughs.

TRILICK & DISTRICT



During the Month of December Trillick & District Young Farmers had a very busy month getting in to the Christmas Festivities as we had our annual Christmas dinner in the bridge inn, Trillick which everyone thoroughly enjoyed a lovely three course meal. We then went on our annual Christmas trip this year T&D travelled to the Share Centre in Lisnaskea to take part in Ice skating, everyone had a great night, even if there were a few falls along the way. T&D also travelled to take part in the choir competition in Belfast during December, unfortunately our club was not placed, well done to everyone who took part.

WEST FERMANAGH



Over the past few months, West Fermanagh YFC has hosted a range of engaging events. Members participated in the Floral Art Competition at Enniskillen Agricultural College, with several securing top places across different age groups. A floral arrangement workshop, led by Rebecca Gilroy from Drumary Nurseries, kicked off the preparations, showcasing impressive designs. Social events included a fun "Fright Night" at Florencecourt House, home management activities with a football game, and a lively exchange with Clanabogan YFC. The club also attended the UFU Dinner Dance, enjoyed a bouncy castle party with Kesh YFC, and celebrated the YFC 95th Anniversary with Lisbellaw members at Clogher House. Additionally, the first meeting of 2025 began with an AGM followed by games, and members enjoyed a creative evening making clay pigs with Clayful Minds, guided by Tanya Trimble. Throughout these months, members have shared laughs, created lasting memories, and strengthened their connections with each other and other YFC clubs. With a mix of competitions, social nights, and hands-on workshops, it's been a vibrant period for West Fermanagh YFC, filled with fun and growth. Looking ahead, the club is excited for future events and continuing to build on these experiences.



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Units 1-2 Glenavy Road
20 Glenavy Road
Moira BT67 0LT

Follow Us



T 028 9261 9620
E info@fanevalley.com
W fanevalley.com