



Plan to Grow

18th November 2015

12.00 - 16.45

**A CONFERENCE
FOR LAND-BASED INDUSTRIES**

SCHEDULE OF DAY

12:00 **Registration** and Buffet Lunch

13:00 Welcome - **Steve Oates** Chichester District Council

13:05 Introduction - **Tony Dignum** Leader of Chichester District Council

SESSION ONE

PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Chaired by **William White** NFU

13:15 **Martin Redfearn** HSBC

13:30 **Andrew Frost** Chichester District Council

13:45 **Gary Taylor** AHDB Horticulture and Lea Valley Growers Association

14:00 **Robert Searle** Tangmere Airfield Nurseries

14:15 Question and Answer Session

14:30 **Refreshments**

SESSION TWO

WATER

Chaired by **John Hall** WSGA

14:45 **James Humphrys** Environment Agency

15:00 **Dr Jerry Knox** Cranfield University

15:15 **Paul Dracott** East Malling Research

15:30 Question and Answer Session

15:45 **SESSION THREE**

SMART TECHNOLOGY – THE FUTURE

Chaired by **Chris Moncrieff** – Vitacress

15:45 **Dr Helen Ferrier** NFU

16:00 **Robert Heikens** Energy4Growth

16:15 **Dr Matthew Howard** Kings College London

16:30 Question and Answer Session

16:45 Summary and Close - **Graham Bryant** Chairman of WSGA

Steve Oates is the Economic Development Manager at Chichester District Council.

As Economic Development Manager Steve's passion is to see local businesses achieve their full potential, grow the local economy and maintain and create a choice of good jobs for local people.

Farming and horticulture are key sectors within Chichester District's economy and as important local employers, their role in strengthening the District's economy is duly recognised

Prior to his current role, Steve is best known as the founder of Chichester-based commercial radio station Spirit



FM which he managed for 10 years, developing it into one of the UK's most successful local radio stations.

He has also run his own small marketing company. He has a keen interest in tourism and is Chairman of Trustees for a major heritage visitor attraction.

Tony Dignum has lived in Chichester since 2000 and is qualified as an accountant. He has been a senior director of leading retail businesses including Dixons Group, H. Samuel and Selfridges.

He served on West Sussex County Council from 2001-05 and in 2011 was elected to Chichester District Council. Tony was appointed to the Financial Portfolio in 2012 and elected Leader of the Council in May this year. One of the key priorities of his Cabinet team is promoting economic growth, recognising the importance of the horticultural and agricultural sectors in that regard.



Tony recently enjoyed a Farm and Horticulture Tour, visiting hydroponic farms, a dairy farm and a vineyard. Walking in the Downs was one reason why he came to live here and is a keen gardener managing alone his own one acre.

William White has a degree in Agriculture from Seale-Hayne College and started with the NFU in 1987. He has held both policy and technical roles at a regional level since then and has been SE Regional Director (RD) for ten years.

William's role as NFU Regional Director involves the overall management of a very capable staff team which includes a local network of 29 Group Secretary offices. In essence his job is mainly about setting policy and representation objectives to bring about the most favourable conditions in which farming and horticultural businesses can thrive.



William is married with three children (one of whom has just graduated from Nottingham University having studied agriculture). He lives near Alton, Hampshire and his outside interests include managing around 60 acres for his local agricultural association and picking-up for a nearby shoot.

Martin Redfearn worked on farms throughout the country as a young man while attending Seale-Hayne College in Devon. After graduating from Seale-Hayne he worked selling animal feeds, fertilisers, seeds and agrochemicals to farmers. Martin then moved on to work in farm business consultancy. He also designed and ran business management training courses for the industry.

Martin joined Barclays Bank as Regional Agricultural Manager in East Anglia in 1995. He was appointed Barclays' National Head of Agriculture in 2010, retiring in early 2015



before taking up the role of Regional Agricultural Director in the South and East of England for HSBC.

In 2009 he was appointed a Fellow of the Institute of Agricultural Management.

Andrew Frost is Head of Planning Services at Chichester and has 28 years experience in local government planning, both in urban and rural environments having previously worked at Horsham District Council and at Croydon Borough Council.



Gary Taylor worked in the fresh produce industry for over forty years. He started as a seasonal worker at VHB in West Sussex where he worked on various sites until moving to Somerset in 1995.

After five years of working at Cantelo Nurseries he moved to Essex where he was instrumental in rebuilding the nursery to the current state. In 2004 the nursery was awarded the prestigious Salad Grower of the year award.

During the past sixteen years Gary has held a number of industry posts. He is the former vice chair of the



National Board for Hort, chairman of the East Anglian hort board and a red tractor TAC committee member.

In February 2013 in the Queen's New Year's honours he was awarded an MBE for services to the pepper industry.

Robert Searle has been working in and around the horticultural industry for the last 12 years, predominately with Tangmere Airfield Nurseries Ltd as their Finance Director.

During this time he also helped to create a 10 member international producer organisation in 2006 and has dealt with the RPA for several years.

Robert is a qualified Chartered Accountant and member of the



Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, with 20 years' experience.

John Hall is a Business Development Consultant specialising in the Horticulture and Fresh Produce Industries. As past Chairman and President of West Sussex Growers' Association, he now represents them as a Consultant. He has a wealth of experience in the Horticultural Industry; having run a number of large commercial horticultural businesses.



Whilst working as a Director and Non-Executive Director with SMEs, and in the corporate sector with Hazlewood Foods, he worked with many leading supermarkets and retailers. For

over 20 years, John was a commercial tomato grower in West Sussex trading as John Hall Nurseries Ltd. and was a main supplier to Sainsbury's.

James Humphrys was born in Malta of English parents and was educated at Brentwood School, Britannia Royal Naval College, Southampton University (BSc) and King's College, London University (MA). During thirty years in the Royal Navy he sailed in most types of ships - including a submarine, a fishery protection vessel, minesweepers, frigates, destroyers and an aircraft carrier, operating worldwide.



He joined the Environment Agency in July 2006 and, after a short spell as the last Southern Regional Director, he is now the Area Manager of Solent & South Downs, which covers most of East and West Sussex, Hampshire

and the Isle of Wight and includes around 360 staff who provide regulation, advice and operations within the 3 primary responsibilities of the Environment Agency – 'regulated industry', 'land, water and biodiversity' and 'flood and coastal risk management'

Dr Jerry Knox. Raised in Kenya and with a farming background, Jerry is an Associate Professor in Agricultural Water Management and Deputy Head of Cranfield Water Science Institute (CWSI). His research focusses on the science, engineering and management of water resources for agriculture, including assessing the relationships between water resources, agricultural productivity (yield) and the environment, and the sustainability of irrigation in the context of climate change impacts and food security.



In 2012 he was the UK Government appointed agriculture lead for the first UK Climate Change Risk Assessment

(CCRA) and in 2015 was appointed international lead expert in water and agriculture to evaluate the US\$400 million UN Food and Agriculture (FAO) programme on climate change adaptation and mitigation. He is Honorary Secretary and a Director of the UK Irrigation Association (UKIA) and Editor for the international journal 'Outlook on Agriculture'

Paul Dracott. After completing an M.Sc at Wye College in Agricultural Economics, Paul joined the Agrochemical Division of Shell International . He was with Shell for 27 years and held a range of marketing, strategy and business management roles in the UK and overseas .



In 2013, he became Project Manager for the WATERR Project at East Malling Research which is funded by the Environment Agency and the European Regional Development Fund. The aim of the Project is to support South East growers to increase their profitability by improving their irrigation water use efficiency and water availability . It has

involved over 150 irrigation businesses accounting for over 60% of irrigation water use within the region . For the last 10 years he has also chaired the Technical Advisory Committee of LEAF Marque which is responsible for drawing up its sustainable farming accreditation standard.

Dr Helen Ferrier is the NFU's Chief Science and Regulatory Affairs Adviser. She leads the organisation's policy work on agricultural science and research, and biotechnology, covering all sectors of farming. Based at NFU HQ in Warwickshire, she leads a team of policy advisers covering plant health, animal health & welfare, farm safety, skills & training, inputs, transport, employment and better regulation.



Helen is a director of the Rothamsted Research Association Board and is a member of the Institute of Food Science and Technology. Before

joining the NFU in 2004, Helen was a research scientist at Imperial College London, working on probabilistic modelling of dietary exposure to pesticides. She has a background in environmental science and technology.

Robert Heikens has studied both mechanical and industrial engineering, which has led to a highly successful career in Horticulture.

Throughout his career he has worked in various aspects of horticulture. In April 2015 Robert, alongside four business partners, founded Energy4Growth.



Dr Matthew Howard is a lecturer at the Centre for Robotics Research, Dept. Informatics, King's College London. Prior to joining King's in Summer 2013, he held a Japan Society for Promotion of Science fellowship at the Department of Mechanoinformatics at the University of Tokyo. From 2009-2012 he was a research fellow at the University of Edinburgh involved in the EU-FY7 STIFF project, and also obtained his PhD in 2009 at Edinburgh with award of an EPSRC CASE award, sponsored by Honda Research. He is internationally recognised in the fields of



robotics. His current interests include robotic skill learning and fast (re) programming by demonstration for soft robotic devices, design and control of variable impedance devices and EMG-based robot control and teleimpedance.

Graham Bryant has worked in Horticulture for 43 years at companies such as Nissan UK, Yoder Toddington, Swallowfield Nurseries and Thomas Rochfords and Sons and has been the Chairman for West Sussex Growers Association for the past 3 years.

He runs his own business: Growtrain Ltd, a specialist land-based training provider



Chris Moncrieff - Production Director for Vitacress and is a last minute addition to the timetable





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