

# Mentoring Programme

...one-to-one support to help your business achieve its potential

- confidential, impartial support and guidance
- sector-specific experience relevant to your business



**FARMING**  
connect  
cyswllt  
**FFERMIO**


**08456 000 813**




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# Sector Key:




AGRI-ENVIRONMENT




ARABLE




BEEF




DAIRY




FORESTRY




HORTICULTURE




ORGANIC




POULTRY




SHEEP




SUCCESSION




DIVERSIFICATION




HEALTH & SAFETY




NICHE




PIGS




JOINT VENTURES




VITICULTURE




BEEES




RENEWABLE ENERGY




PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT



BUSINESS MANAGEMENT



GRASSLAND



WELSH SPEAKER

# Introduction

...practical guidance and support from experienced farmers and foresters

- Do you need to take your farm or forestry business forward in a new direction?
- Are you an established business owner who would value mentoring from an independent individual with experience of a particular issue or challenge?
- Are you considering a new business enterprise or project which could increase your efficiency or provide a new stream of income?
- Are you a new entrant setting up and seeking guidance?

If any of the above apply to you, free, confidential mentoring and support from an experienced farmer or forester could provide the help, encouragement and inspiration you need.

# Our mentors and how they can help you

Farming Connect has an approved network of 63 mentors located throughout Wales.

A Farming Connect mentor can...

- Provide an independent, unbiased and confidential perspective
- Discuss your issues, concerns and aims for the future
- Provide a sounding board for your ideas
- Share their experiences with you, both successes and failures
- Challenge you to justify your proposals
- Help you identify problems and find solutions

To find out more about each mentor's background, skills and expertise browse through the detailed 'mentor directory' which can be found at: [www.gov.wales/farmingconnect](http://www.gov.wales/farmingconnect).



# Mentoring Programme – eligibility criteria

...reaching more individuals, supporting more businesses

Category of business (confirmed at registration)	Mentoring Programme
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Farm business</li><li>• Forestry business</li><li>• New entrant</li><li>• Niche farming/forestry system over 550 standard labour hours per annum</li><li>• Food business</li></ul>	One to one farm/forestry mentoring  15 hours of support to be provided during a 12 month period, starting from the date the application for the service is approved

## How to apply for mentoring

Complete the Mentoring Programme application form on line on:  
[www.gov.wales/farmingconnect](http://www.gov.wales/farmingconnect)

Here you will find full profiles for all mentors and you can narrow your search by clicking the filtering tool which will filter mentors who can address your exact needs.

You will receive an email from Farming Connect confirming your application has been approved. Your mentor will then get in touch to arrange your first meeting.

This is usually face to face after which the active mentor/mentee relationship will continue in the most appropriate format as agreed between both parties.

# Our Mentors

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# OUR MENTORS



**ALAN DAVIES**  
Fferm Llys (Denbighshire)

## Key Sectors:



## Specialisms or interests:

Early lamb Production, Beef finishing



**ALAN PARRY JONES**  
Derwen Gam (LLŷn and Snowdonia)

## Key Sectors:



## Specialisms or interests:

Sheep milking, Organic beef and lamb production, Succession



**ALED JONES**  
Tregeiriog (Denbighshire)

## Key Sectors:



## Specialisms or interests:

Sheep production and shepherding, Grassland management and grazing systems

## THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF

Alan farms a 250 acre lowland enterprise and rents a further 210 acres in winter. He purchases up to 250 store cattle a year, which he finishes. Alongside the beef enterprise, Alan manages a flock of 700 Texel cross Mule breeding ewes. Alan's aim is to develop a more efficient business by trialling new and different ways of working, producing beef and lamb efficiently in order to meet market requirements.

He is a supporter of his local young farmers' club and keen to impart his knowledge to new entrants.

## THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF

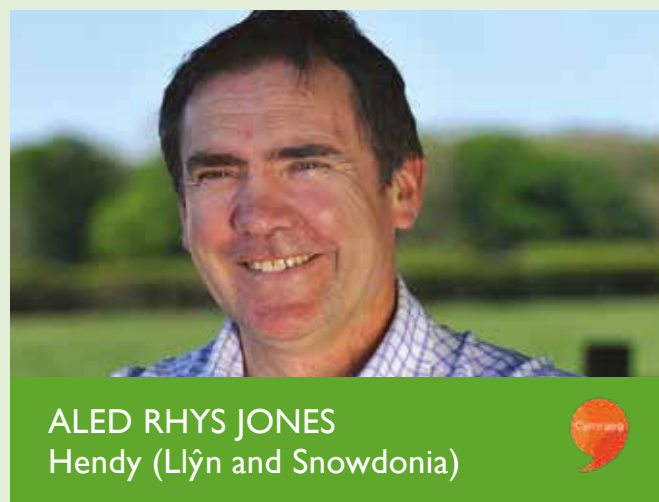
Alan, who farms a 215 acre holding and rents a further 79 acres, began milking Lleyen and Friesland sheep in 2017. With growing demand for produce, he is already planning to increase flock numbers with the hope of building his own on farm processing dairy. A new enterprise to sell bottled fresh milk and frozen milk from the farm gate together with a new visitor centre are also in the pipeline.

Having successfully changed and adapted his way of farming to suit both the needs of his family and business, Alan is well equipped to help others who are keen to diversify into niche areas of farming. Alan also runs a 25 cow herd and has been farming organically since 2004. He is currently in the process of bringing his sons into the business therefore has some experience of farm succession.

## THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF

Former Farming Connect demonstration farmer Aled, owns 120 acres and is a contract shepherd for 1,000 acres. His own stock includes 30 Welsh Black cattle plus 40 youngstock, together with 350 Welsh and Mule ewes and 100 ewe lambs. In recent years he has introduced slightly bigger, hardier and more productive ewes and has also focused on improving his grassland and grazing systems.

Aled has helped a number of farmers to fulfil their ambition of becoming contract shepherds. Aled is a strong believer in keeping an eye on costings in order to maximise incomes.



**ALED RHYS JONES**  
Hendy (Llyn and Snowdonia)



**Key Sectors:**



**Specialisms or interests:**

Sheep production and shepherding, Grassland management and grazing systems



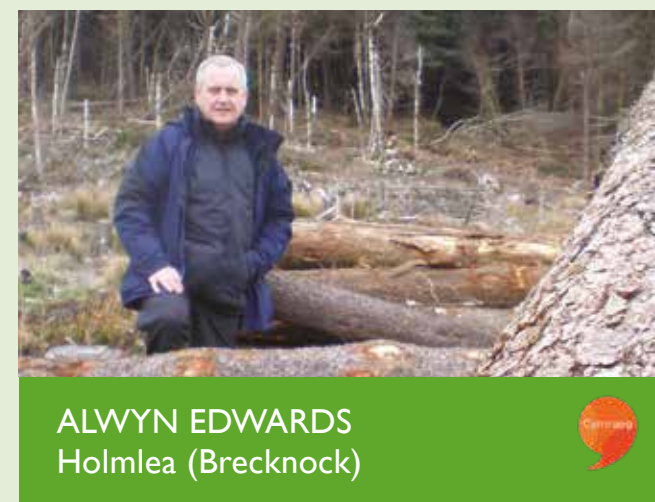
**Alice Lampard**  
Mandinam Farm (Carmarthenshire)

**Key Sectors:**



**Specialisms or interests:**

Mediation and Development Mentoring



**ALWYN EDWARDS**  
Holmlea (Brecknock)



**Key Sectors:**



**Specialisms or interests:**

Woodland Planning Management



**ALWYN JONES**  
Camaes (Conwy)



**Key Sectors:**



**Specialisms or interests:**

Grassland management

**THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF**

Aled has held numerous high-profile positions within the agriculture industry. He has developed his family farm significantly both in terms of milk production and sales of pedigree females and bulls. Aled now has 340 Holstein cows producing 3,350,000 litres annually. He embraces new technologies and innovative ways of working in order to improve standards of farm management and protecting the environment. Significant investment has been made in energy saving devices and savings have also been made in reducing the use of nitrogen fertiliser by targeted use of slurry.

**THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF**

With a background in commercial sheep, pedigree beef and construction, Alice also has experience of woodland and tourism diversification. As an Agrisgôp facilitator she has worked with various groups ranging from permanent cropping to grass roots farming to political lobbying. She also works as a freelance coach and mediator with corporate groups and individuals, meaning she has extensive experience of the challenges and opportunities facing land-based businesses in Wales.

**THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF**

Chartered forester Alwyn has worked as a self-employed forestry consultant, working with a range of clients in both the public and private sectors to deliver rural management projects, supported by broad environmental advice. His roles have included managing annual rural maintenance budgets and reporting on cash flows, using cost benefit analysis techniques. He has also undertaken Grown in Britain auditing training to look at diversification opportunities that can be achieved from woodland management by adding value from biomass and carbon trading through the Carbon Code.

**THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF**

Alwyn continually strives to improve the way he farms, imparting his knowledge by offering work placements and through his role with the Bro Hiraethog Training Board. He has improved grassland management at his farm through using less fertiliser and making better use of slurry. As a former Farming Connect demonstration farmer, Alwyn has undertaken various trials, for example feeding yeast concentrate to lambs, adding extra protein to silage and growing red clover. All of these have delivered improved growth and better daily live-weight gains.





**ANDY MATTHEWS**  
Aberbran Fawr (Brecknock)

**Key Sectors:**



**Specialisms or interests:**

Business development, Diversification



**ANDY MENZIES**  
Ty Mawr Uchaf (Montgomeryshire)

**Key Sectors:**



**Specialisms or interests:**

Goat breeding and meat production,  
Developing goat meat products



**ARWYN WILLIAMS**  
Hendre Nantcyll (Llŷn & Snowdonia)

**Key Sectors:**



**Specialisms or interests:**

Grassland management



**BARBARA HUGHES**  
Ivy House Farm (Wrexham)

**Key Sectors:**



**Specialisms or interests:**

Pumpkins, Pick your own fruit

**THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF**

Andy, a former Farming Connect demonstration farmer, has over 20 years' experience of farming and contracting. Together with partner Kay, he owns 45 acres with a further 480 acres rented long term. The business has 45 Limousin cross suckler cows and 500 crossbred ewes.

They have expanded their campsite and developed a shop to complement their extended pick your own fruit and vegetables enterprise. They have significantly extended the pick your own season from early/mid June to the end of August, improving viability. A small but successful game shoot has also been established.

**THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF**

Andy has had 40 years of practical experience of livestock and arable farming, which he is now applying to develop his goat enterprise. Andy farms 35 breeding goats plus followers on a 10 acre holding which he has owned for over 20 years. As well as goat production, Andy also buys cade lambs which he rears and sells on as hoggets. He utilises EID to monitor daily liveweight gain and track animal performance which has led to significant benefits within the business.

A keen advocate of benchmarking, he regularly monitors the performance of his stock and believes that success comes with attention to detail.

**THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF**

Arwyn farms a 390 acre upland farm and at least half of this is moorland. He has 25 Limousin cross suckler cows and 425 Tregaron type Welsh breeding ewes. He also undertakes shearing and fencing contracting work.

This former Farming Connect demonstration farmer uses Aberdale ewes to further increase his lambing percentage. He also undertakes soil testing, which has helped improve soil quality and reduced fertiliser costs. As a result of trial work undertaken by Farming Connect on the farm he now makes better use of slurry and uses slurry bugs to treat manure.

**THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF**

Barbara farms a 222-acre dairy farm with husband Derek. They started out renting a 36-acre County Council farm in 1984 before securing a tenancy on another nearby farm. In 1994, she received shocking news that a prison would be built on their council holding and had to find another farm. This is how they found Ivy House. Originally a 70-acre farm, they have since purchased surrounding land and the farm now extends over 220 acres.

In 2010, Barbara diversified into producing pumpkins for Halloween. Using a spare field and information researched on the internet, Barbara got to work and the decision proved to be a success. The pumpkin patch is open during October where customers can pick their own pumpkins. The business diversified again in 2019 with a Pick Your Own enterprise growing strawberries, which is opening to the public in 2020. Barbara says that she is still learning and trialling what works best.



**BEN ANTHONY**  
Frowen (Carmarthenshire)

#### Key Sectors:



#### Specialisms or interests:

Improving flock performance, Home-grown crops and forage



**BRIAN REES**  
Penbryncennau (Radnorshire)

#### Key Sectors:



#### Specialisms or interests:

Organising Health & Safety Awareness Days, Diversification



**CARYS WYN EDWARDS**  
TY Cerrig (Meirionnydd)

#### Key Sectors:



#### Specialisms or interests:

Start-up bee enterprises, Pollination/growing plants for bees, Environmental benefits, Diversification



**CHERYL DAVIES**  
Cefn Y Maes (Montgomeryshire)

#### Key Sectors:



#### Specialisms or interests:

Human Resources, Succession, Improving profitability

#### THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF

Ben and his partner Diana own 145 acres, including 35 acres of woodland and rent a further 110 acres. All business decisions are based on performance and profitability. Having carried out research on market requirements and prices, Ben decided to reduce cow numbers and expand the sheep enterprise.

Ben provided improved sheep housing and prioritised investment in what is now a high-output sheep enterprise. He has also improved flock performance through EID, tightening the lambing pattern and monitoring the flock to identify the optimum ewe for the farm.

**British Farming Awards Sheep  
Innovator of the Year 2016**

#### THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF

Alongside managing the 247 acre farm and a further 74 acres rented, Brian runs an independent H&S training and consultancy business. First established in 1980, the business specialises in farm H&S. Brian holds TDLB and NEBOSH qualifications and is a member of IOSH's rural industries group. His areas of expertise include all aspects of general farm safety including working with animals, lift trucks, tractors and ATVs, machinery, pesticides, ground care, working at heights, construction site safety and general H&S.

A skilled communicator and current Chair of the Wales Farm Safety Partnership, Brian has trained and advised about farm H&S for most of his adult life. He finds the role of visiting or addressing farmers to help them implement safer ways of working very rewarding.

#### THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF

Carys is an award-winning bee keeper who has competed at agricultural events and shows throughout the UK for more than 25 years. She is in demand as a speaker and has worked with several organisations including gardening clubs, the Women's Institute, schools and colleges. Carys currently farms a 370 acre tenanted mountain farm alongside her father where they farm 300 Welsh mountain ewes. She owns 70 colonies of honey bees and is planning to increase numbers to 200 by moving to a new 26 acre smallholding and establishing hives with other local landowners.

Carys is keen to help would-be beekeepers adopt best practice from the outset including identifying suitable locations for hives, advising on equipment and sourcing bees, feeding and keeping colonies healthy as well as extracting and selling honey and bi-products.

#### THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF

Cheryl owns and runs a consultancy business, advising and supporting farmers and workers within the agricultural industry on health & safety, employee issues and various business-related topics including proposals, HR, succession, cost savings and profitability. Cheryl takes away the fear of health & safety on farms and provides support for farmers regarding basic needs.

With 25 years' experience, Cheryl can guide individuals on how to achieve success within their businesses. She also understands the importance of benchmarking and how it can improve profitability and productivity. Cheryl believes that succession and planning for the future are key in the overall make up of any business and has previously worked on projects relating to business succession.

She understands the pressures that the farming community can face and hopes that she can give farmers the ability to see past the barriers and take their businesses to the next level.





**CHRIS HUGHES**  
Coed Pwllacca (Brecknock)

**Key Sectors:**



**Specialisms or interests:**

Forestry & woodland management, Renewable energy, Rural enterprise, Training



**CHRISTOPHER JAMES**  
Home Farm (Pembrokeshire)

**Key Sectors:**



**Specialisms or interests:**

Low cost forage systems



**DAFYDD PARRY JONES**  
Maesllwyni (Montgomeryshire)

**Key Sectors:**



**Specialisms or interests:**

Grassland and clover management, Building design



**DAVID BROOKE**  
Tanycoed (Carmarthenshire)

**Key Sectors:**



**Specialisms or interests:**

New Entrants, Personal Development

**THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF**

Alongside working as a training provider in the land-based industries, Chris owns 10 acres of mixed broadleaf woodland which he manages on a continuous-cover basis. Together with wife Anne and four of their grown-up children, he also runs their home-based family woodland contracting business which they first set up to produce firewood and woodfuel chips back in 1985. Most of Chris's working life has involved mentoring and delivering training within the land-based sectors, specifically agriculture, forestry and woodland, arboriculture and construction.

Chris is looking forward to giving something back by helping businesses manage health and safety in the workplace, based on practical work experience.

**THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF**

Christopher is a member of various agricultural committees and is a well-known public speaker. He has won numerous grassland awards over the years.

In 2000, he converted the enterprise from a large, mixed estate to a specialist spring grazing unit and has since purchased 500 acres. Christopher has established a joint venture to rear dairy beef calves from his herds. Christopher embraces new technologies including satellite soil sampling, enabling him to use variable rate spreading of nutrients which has achieved considerable cost savings.

**BGS Welsh Grassland Farmer of the Year 2015 and British Runner-up**

**THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF**

Dafydd has expanded his upland farm which now runs to 470 acres, creating an efficient organic system which utilises grass. Red and white clover is used to produce lamb and beef of the highest quality, with minimum cost of production, for premium markets.

He has developed an upland farming system with low labour requirements as a result of improved buildings and animal handling systems. New technology and streamlined methods have helped him reduce outputs and the farm is 100% protein sufficient.

**BGS British Grassland Farmer of the Year 2014 and Dalehead/Waitrose Lamb Producer of the Year 2014**

**THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF**

David has farmed in the Teifi valley for 25 years. His farming career includes retailing milk, on farm sales, intensive pig production and more recently organic dairy farming. Having started out on a county council smallholding, David has also farmed overseas including Minnesota, Florida and America.

In 2018, David joined the Farming Connect Venture programme and was paired up with a young entrant into farming. They have now been farming in partnership for 9 months, running a profitable business milking 110 cows daily. David also kept a flock of 80 Lleyn ewes, together with his late wife. He also has experience of free range egg production and roadside sales.

David can offer guidance to new entrants into farming, using his varied personal experience to help those starting out in the industry.





**DAVID GRAVELL**  
Mudlescwm Farm (Carmarthenshire)



#### Key Sectors:



#### Specialisms or interests:

Milk from forage, Benchmarking



**DAVID WILLIAMS**  
Clawdd Offa (Flintshire)

#### Key Sectors:



#### Specialisms or interests:

Grass/forage based systems, Financial and business planning



**DELYTH PARRY**  
Llwynrhdyll (Brecknock)

#### Key Sectors:



#### Specialisms or interests:

Succession and financial planning, Benchmarking, Understanding your business



**EILIR EVANS**  
Henbant (Ceredigion)



#### Key Sectors:



#### Specialisms or interests:

Grass-based systems, Heifer rearing

### THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF

David's 500 acre farm has evolved significantly through benchmarking and knowledge transfer. A study tour to New Zealand led him to setting up a spring calving, low input, grass-based system and he now strives to strike a balance between farming profitably and sustainably.

A keen advocate of discussion groups which provide the opportunity to explore challenges and opportunities and to assess progress through benchmarking, he is always keen to share his knowledge, hosting many farm visits and encouraging younger farmers to find new and improved ways of farming.

### THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF

David farms a 296 acre tenanted farm with 198 acres used as the grazing platform for 300 Jersey Friesian crossbred spring calving cows. He also rears 150 replacement youngstock and stock bulls.

By concentrating on budgeting and monitoring cash flow, he runs a profit focused, sustainable business which he has changed from a total mixed ration feed all-year round calving system, to a grass-based, spring block calving herd, which he milks once a day.

Knowledgeable on numerous dairy systems, he is a passionate believer in knowledge transfer.

### THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF

Delyth has worked as an agricultural bank manager with a leading high street bank for over 15 years where she provides guidance to many farming businesses. She encourages people to make what are often small changes but lead to significant improvements and add value to their enterprises. Married to a sheep farmer, she also helps with day to day tasks on the farm during busy periods. With knowledge of most sectors, she is keen to help more farmers appreciate that the actions and decisions taken within a business can influence outputs through trading accounts.

With confidentiality uppermost at all times, Delyth is eager to share her knowledge of best practice, business, succession and financial planning and also advise farmers on when they should seek independent advice from other professional advisers with strategic decisions.

### THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF

Eilir currently farms 330ha with his partner, Catrin. He converted a 130ha organic sheep farm to dairy and has a herd of 700 cows which have been split into two units.

Eilir has expanded his farm from 100ha to 330ha through purchase and rental, and has great confidence in dealing with the bank, producing budgets, cash flows and commentary. Eilir believes that giving constructive criticism is one of the best ways for an individual, and the business, to improve and grow.

What Eilir can offer is a vast amount of experience and open mindedness, from grassland management to financial budgeting, to joint ventures of any kind.



**EURIG JENKINS**  
Pentrefelin (Ceredigion)



#### Key Sectors:



#### Specialisms or interests:

Grass-based systems, Heifer rearing



**GARETH DAVIES**  
Upper House (Radnorshire)

#### Key Sectors:



#### Specialisms or interests:

Succession planning, Holiday Accommodation, Benchmarking, Personal development, Tourism



**GARY REES**  
Brooksgrove Farm (Pembrokeshire)

#### Key Sectors:



#### Specialisms or interests:

Diversification, Adding Value



**GETHIN JONES**  
Hafoty Hendre (Denbighshire)



#### Key Sectors:



#### Specialisms or interests:

Risk Assessments, Construction, Machinery

### THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF

Under the Young Entrants Support Scheme, Eurig is head of holding of this growing family farm which runs to 182 acres owned and 518 acres rented. This former Farming Connect demonstration farmer says the expert advice received enabled him to develop the farm enterprise and his own farm management skills.

A significant programme of expansion has included the installation of major infrastructure for long term profitable milk production. Cow numbers have increased to 410 head of spring calving cows and 280 youngstock.

**BGS British Grassland Farmer  
of the Year 2016**

### THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF

Gareth farms a 220 acre grassland farm plus a further 75 acres rented on a fixed tenancy.

A keen advocate of both personal and business development, Gareth is aware of the succession issues that many farming families face today. He says that families put themselves under immense financial pressure which leads to huge implications on mental health and family relationships. A subject that is very close to his heart, Gareth is keen to share his succession experience with others who need to 'start the succession conversation'.

Gareth also works as an Agrisgôp Leader therefore has the necessary mentoring and facilitation skills needed to listen and provide guidance based on his own experiences as a farmer and business person.

### THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF

Gary runs a 60-acre horticulture farm growing a range of seasonal produce. With firsthand experience of both growing crops and running his own business, Gary can offer support and guidance to those starting out as well as more experienced horticulturalists looking to add value.

Gary started with wholesale soft fruit production but diversified with a PYO enterprise in 2013. The Pumpkin Patch followed in 2014 and is open during October every year. He is also in the third year of developing a cut flower enterprise.

Gary puts strong emphasis on adding value and has fully embraced the benefits of branding; marketing and direct sales. Having previously worked in IT, Gary feels that his years away from have enabled him to see other ways of circumventing potential problems and applying a fresh approach whilst still being realistic in achieving a goal.

### THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF

Gethin owns 65 acres of upland grazing and rents a further 50 acres of lowland where he keeps Aberdale ewes which are put to a Beltex ram. With a career in construction, Gethin has previously worked as a site supervisor on multi-million-pound contracts nationwide. He has also managed his own engineering and construction business for the last ten years and has worked as a trainer and tester in the construction industry.

Gethin has many years' experience in the heavily legislated construction environment therefore understands the expectations of the HSE regarding safety. For the last 5 years Gethin has worked as a self-employed plant and machinery trainer, tester and NVQ assessor. He has delivered many health and safety courses and undertaken risk assessments for various companies to accredited standards.





**GLASNANT MORGAN**  
Pwllrhwyaid (Brecknock)



#### Key Sectors:



#### Specialisms or interests:

Grassland management, Renewable energy



**GLYN DAVIES**  
Penlan (Ceredigion)



#### Key Sectors:



#### Specialisms or interests:

H&S training and awareness,  
Agricultural contracting



**GLYN VAUGHAN**  
Dolcorsllwyn (Montgomeryshire)



#### Key Sectors:



#### Specialisms or interests:

Pedigree breeding and retailing,  
Market requirements



**GWYDION JONES**  
Tyn y Ffynnon (Conwy)



#### Key Sectors:



#### Specialisms or interests:

Share farming, Grass based dairy systems

### THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF

Glasnant's family farm has expanded to over 400 acres. The key aim of the business is to keep self-sufficient, ensuring family members make up the labour force. They have 45 Charolais cross suckler cows, with summer calving cows turned out to the mountain to avoid mastitis and release more ground for mowing. They also have a closed flock of 800 breeding ewes plus 210 replacements. Diversifying into green energy through solar, biomass and hydroelectric, growing crops and reseeding collectively have played a crucial role in maintaining efficiency and have contributed to profitability.

**BGS British Grassland Farmer  
of the Year 2005**

### THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF

Glyn, a former Health & Safety instructor, has more than 38 years' experience of working in agriculture including operating a variety of farm machinery efficiently and safely. He farms on a half rented 160 acre holding with 250 lowland ewes and 250 upland ewes which are mainly kept for meat production and replacements. He also runs an agri-contracting business with key services being round bale harvesting and hedge cutting. Glyn has extensive Health & Safety knowledge, specifically tractor driving and tractor driving on slopes, and is keen to share his knowledge with other farm businesses in a bid to reduce the risk of accidents and make Welsh farms safer.

### THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF

In 1993, Glyn purchased five pedigree Limousin cows for his 500 acre beef and sheep farm. By today, he has developed a herd of 60 pedigree Limousin suckler cows and followers plus a flock of 500 mainly Welsh ewes.

Glyn's philosophy is to continually monitor the progress of all farm projects through his own purpose built computer breeding programme and to adapt to circumstances as they arise. Through understanding what the market requires, he runs a profitable business which meets buyer needs.

Glyn is a strong believer in being passionate about what you do, but to always produce what the market wants and not what you think it wants.

### THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF

After graduating, Gwydion returned home to work on the family farm which at that time had 400 sheep and 50 milking cows. To maximise output, he reduced sheep numbers and increased the dairy herd, creating a simple low cost system producing milk from grass. The 240 acre farm now has 160 spring calving cows on an extended grazing system, plus 100 youngstock.

Gwydion also has a 50% share in a joint venture business which has converted a local sheep farm into a 450 dairy cow farm.



**HAYDN EVANS**  
Parceithin Farm (Carmarthenshire)

**Key Sectors:**



**Specialisms or interests:**

Youngstock rearing, Succession planning



**HELEN BENNETT**  
Upper Hall (Montgomeryshire)

**Key Sectors:**



**Specialisms or interests:**

Diversification, Egg production



**HUW JONES**  
Prysgau Ganol (Meirionydd)

**Key Sectors:**



**Specialisms or interests:**

Business development, Forestry business management



**IOAN GWILYM ROBERTS**  
Tryfil Isaf (Anglesey)

**Key Sectors:**



**Specialisms or interests:**

Native cattle breeds, Genetics, Animal health and husbandry, Nutrition

**THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF**

Haydn, a former bank manager, bought his farm 20 years ago. He and his son, who is now head of holding, run a 240 acre organic dairy farm split into two units – 84 acres owned, and 156 acres rented. One farm houses the milking herd, while the other is utilised as a youngstock rearing unit. He has 100 British Friesian cows together with 70 followers and two stock bulls – a British Friesian and Hereford. They have invested in renewable energy, including a wind turbine.

Haydn believes that enthusiasm is critical but is no guarantee of success. His tip is to have a business plan for what you want to achieve and get someone to challenge it.

**THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF**

Helen has been part of the current business for over 25 years. The farm extends to 580 acres, plus an additional 300 acres of rented and contract farmed land, which is managed organically. They have 120 Holstein Friesian dairy cows plus 200 followers, as well as 600 pedigree Lleyn ewes and 25 Texel ewes.

The farm has installed renewable energy systems and has invested in a 64,000 bird free range laying enterprise. Helen has ten years' experience in diversification projects such as growing and producing organic vegetables, a Glastir Woodland Creation Scheme, solar PV, biomass and the renovation of farm houses and a holiday cottage.

**THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF**

In 2002, Huw, who had started out on a small family farm and then worked on other farms in his area, took over a 70 acre council upland farm. He has steadily built the farm into a successful forestry business and he has two teams of workers felling both flat areas as well as trees on slopes using a winch.

He also keeps 150 Welsh Mule ewes and four pedigree Welsh Black suckler cows with calves which are sold at 18 months old at local market. Huw believes that making sure there is a strong demand for your produce is the key to business success. He also thinks it is vital to admit to mistakes and learn from them.

**THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF**

Ioan runs a 160 acre holding split into two units and has over 40 years of experience of working on the family farm. After 14 years working as a teacher, he returned home to farm where he pursued his passion of working Wales' indigenous Welsh Black cattle. He currently has around 130 pedigree Welsh Black cattle and his knowledge and experience of the breed has been widely recognised through his many roles with specialist societies.

Ioan believes that one of the best attributes of the Welsh Black breed is their ability to cope with Welsh topography and weather conditions. He also has a great interest in genetics and believes that farmers should always use the best genetics available to them.





**IOAN WILLIAMS**  
Brynsegur (Carmarthenshire)



#### Key Sectors:



#### Specialisms or interests:

Regulation Renewable energy



**JAMES COWAN**  
Blaencwmpridd (Ceredigion)

#### Key Sectors:



#### Specialisms or interests:

Improving genetics, Fattening bulls & heifers under 24 months



**JAMES POWELL**  
Dolygarn (Brecknockshire)

#### Key Sectors:



#### Specialisms or interests:

Sheep, Cattle, Pigs



**JAMES RAW**  
Tyllwyd (Ceredigion)



#### Key Sectors:



#### Specialisms or interests:

Renewable energy (Hydro), Diversification

### THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF

Ioan's 230 acre farm includes 70 acres of broadleaf woodland and 30 acres of designated SSSI land. The farm is let for summer grazing for cattle and tack sheep in winter. Six acres of root crops are grown annually, used as game cover for the small shoot run on the farm, and then sold as a standing crop to a sheep farmer to finish store lambs.

Ioan has a vast knowledge of the pressures that affect the agri-environment in Wales, and has delivered training and knowledge transfer to farmers to develop sustainable, profitable farming enterprises. He has also worked with farmers to improve their soil and nutrient management, resulting in considerable financial savings.

### THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF

Formerly a Farming Connect demonstration farmer, James' upland family farm comprises 255 acres owned and 180 acres rented. The stock includes 300 beef cattle and 600 Texel mules and Welsh mules. Between 30 and 40 acres of barley and oats are grown for livestock feed, along with swedes for the ewes.

James has significantly improved the genetics of his herd and has made the farm more self-sufficient by producing more home-grown feed. He has led many discussion groups and hosted knowledge transfer beef production days addressing marketing, health, breeding and correct nutrition.

Farmers Weekly Beef Farmer  
of the year runner-up 2013

### THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF

Beef, sheep and pig farmer James farms at his 450 acres upland farm near Llandrindod Wells. He keeps a flock of 1,000 ewes and runs a low input rotational grazing system which concentrates on productive genetics, grazing quality and minimal antibiotics. He also keeps 1,000 pigs run on B&B contract finishing system and rears 240 calves on contract per year.

James practices a progressive approach to farming and ensures that he is aware of any impacts on the environment. This includes renewables, no till, catch cropping and multi species leys. Always interested in new opportunities to earn additional income, James diversified and now runs a holiday cottage.

James has strong connections with rural young movements and is passionate about securing a sustainable future in agriculture for future generations.

### THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF

James shares his time between his three holdings, Tyllwyd, Blaencwm and Nanteos, a combination of hill farms and lowland. James has a flock of 900 Welsh Mountain ewes, but also keeps 35 Limousin cows which he sells as store cattle. Additional to this, he has two 100 kW Hydroelectric schemes, 20ha of forestry land from which he sells as firewood, a small farm campsite, has short term letting properties and grows 5-10ha of combinable Barley. Recently, James won the "Most Carbon Neutral Farm 2016" at the Energy Now UK Awards. With 20 years of experience James has developed his business by adapting the farming systems according to external influences and believes it is vital to recognise and utilise potential developments for businesses to thrive.



**JENNY DAVIES**  
Llwynhelyg (Ceredigion)

**Key Sectors:**



**Specialisms or interests:**

Farm diversification, Farm gate retail



**JOHN BOOTH**  
Rhual Dairy (Flintshire)

**Key Sectors:**



**Specialisms or interests:**

Share farming, Farm infrastructure



**JIM BOWEN**  
Clynfyw (Pembrokeshire)

**Key Sectors:**



**Specialisms or interests:**

Care farming, Business planning,  
Community regeneration, Networking



**JOHN DAVIES**  
Cilrhue (Pembrokeshire)

**Key Sectors:**



**Specialisms or interests:**

Calf rearing, Rotational grazing, Using EID

**THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF**

Jenny, along with her husband Teifi (who is also a mentor) diversified from dairy farming to set up one of Wales' first farm shops. Jenny's emphasis has always been to stock home grown & local products and has won many accolades for local retailing, sustainability, local sourcing & best farm diversification. Jenny is proficient in farm accounts and records, VAT and working out costings, profitability forecasts both on the farm and especially with the farm shop business. Jenny can advise on how to meet trading standards and environmental health requirements.

Along with the Farm Shop, Jenny and Teifi farm 100 acres, keeping a herd of 50-60 cattle and growing vegetable and herbs.

**THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF**

In addition to his role as assistant manager of a large dairy unit, John runs a share farming dairy enterprise with 320 cows plus 160 youngstock, on an all year round calving system with an average yield of 8,800 litres.

John has recently upgraded his slurry store to comply with a Nitrate Vulnerable Zones designation, along with developing the infrastructure of the farm to accommodate the bigger herd. He is involved with a number of local dairy groups.

John believes in honesty and having the ability to listen, learn and react with confidence for business success.

**THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF**

Jim is currently managing director of Clynfyw CIC, a care farm in north Pembrokeshire set up in 2011. At Clynfyw, they operate various innovative and meaningful countryside projects for disabled and vulnerable people, inspiring and supporting them to extend their potential.

Previously an organic farmer having run a series of socially-responsible on-farm diversification projects including accessible holidays and 'green' weddings and conferences, Jim still uses organic philosophy in all aspects of the enterprise. Environmentally friendly practices are also emphasized with all staff members given appropriate training to raise awareness of environmental issues.

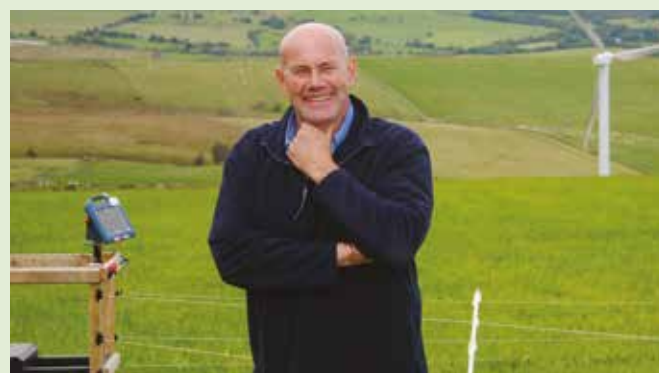
As part of his work at Clynfyw, he has helped set up over 20 micro-enterprises and schemes such as community apple juicing service, charcoal making and gardening service, meaning he can help others develop economically viable micro-enterprises and schemes.

**THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF**

John farms alongside his brother on their 220 acre farm. Since his involvement, the business has moved from a traditional mixed beef, sheep and dairy system to solely dairy and then to solely beef rearing. Their 250 cow beef herd consist of Friesian and Hereford crosses, Friesian and Angus crosses and Friesian heifers. The farm operates a New Zealand grass based rotational grazing system with intensive finishing. They also use an EID weighing indicator, with findings influencing feed levels and grouping. John introduced renewable energy into the business with a 100kw solar system and 500kw biomass boiler.

John also has a part time job working as a salesman and business development manager with a leading agricultural supplies company.





**JOHN YEOMANS**  
Llwyn y Brain (Montgomeryshire)

#### Key Sectors:



#### Specialisms or interests:

Performance recording, Benchmarking



**KEITH WILLIAMS**  
Hendy (Radnorshire)

#### Key Sectors:



#### Specialisms or interests:

Low cost sheep production, Rotational grazing



**KERI DAVIES**  
Glwydcaenewydd (Brecknock)

#### Key Sectors:



#### Specialisms or interests:

Tourism, Grassland management, Benchmarking, Agricultural contracting, Succession



**LILWEN JOYNSON**  
Y Felin Fach (Pembrokeshire)

#### Key Sectors:



#### Specialisms or interests:

Personal development, Performance coaching

#### THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF

John's farm extends to 284 acres, with 231 acres owned and 53 acres rented. He has a closed suckler herd of 70- 75 pedigree Limousin and crossbred cows and 12-19 heifers, calving at two years old. He also has a closed flock of 500 Beulah ewes and 160 Beulah ewe lambs, now scanning at around 160%.

The farm includes a small area of woodland and has invested in renewable energy with solar panels. John is a strong believer in sharing problems as there are always people who have been through the same things.

**British Farming Awards Sheep  
Innovator of the Year Runner-up 2016**  
**Farmers Weekly Sheep Farmer  
of the Year 2018**

#### THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF

Keith's farm runs to 360 acres, plus 20 acres rented. He keeps 880 ewes, including 60 performance recorded Texels, plus 240 ewe lambs. He also has a closed suckler herd of 20 pedigree Welsh Black cattle. Since taking over the family holding he has worked steadily to develop the business through improving soil and grassland management and introducing high EBV stock.

Keith helped develop Farming Connect's Comparable Farm Profit template to help farmers better understand their businesses.

**Farmers Weekly Sheep Farmer  
of the Year 2013**

#### THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF

Keri farms a 130 acre enterprise and rents a further 150 acres, which is all managed organically. The farming enterprise consists of breeding and store cattle, 550 Black Faced Mule crosses and Texel ewes and 7 acres of winter sown cereals. Five years ago, Keri and his wife Julie started diversifying into tourism, a venture which expanded rapidly. They began with two American log homes and have since purchased a neighbouring farm and local pub. Their planned programme of business development has continued with 5\* accommodation in a mix of converted and new buildings together with glamping pods. The business has also invested £150,000 in renewables in recent years including a 30kw roof solar and bore holes.

Keri is keen to encourage other entrepreneurial farmers to consider new streams of income which could help them develop profitable and sustainable farm businesses.

#### THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF

Lilwen was raised on a 64 acre dairy farm and has had a vast and unique experience in the agricultural sector including farm diversification, business development and how to grow a business or make effective changes to become more efficient and streamlined. Lilwen is good at transforming communication and keeping things simple as well as supporting leadership development and a healthy work and life balance. She also has excellent problem solving skills and is eager to help individuals to discover the best outcome for them.

Lilwen also works as an Agrisgôp leader and is passionate about keeping positive internal dialogue to ensure that all parties involved are listened to and empowered.



**LOWRI REES-ROBERTS**  
Dolhendre Isa (Meirionnydd)



#### Key Sectors:



#### Specialisms or interests:

Diversification, On farm hydro schemes



**LLŶR HUGHES**  
Fferm Gyd (Anglesey)



#### Key Sectors:



#### Specialisms or interests:

Genetics, Home-grown feeds



**LLYR JONES**  
Abercefel (Ceredigion)



#### Key Sectors:



#### Specialisms or interests:

Safe working procedures, carrying out and preparing for audits and inspections, providing training on a variety of health, safety and environmental issues



**MALCOM THOMAS**  
Ty'n y Caeau (Flintshire)

#### Key Sectors:



#### Specialisms or interests:

Processing and selling farm reared turkeys, Direct & retail sales, Marketing, Nutrient Management Planning

### THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF

Lowri lives with her young family on their 300 acre holding where they farm 300 Welsh mountain ewes and 60 pedigree Welsh Black cattle. She has had responsibility for all management and administration aspects of her family's civil engineering business for over 20 years and, with the company's diversification into farm hydro schemes, now specialises in both farm and company H&S. Lowri has completed several Health & Safety qualifications and has extensive knowledge and experience of general H&S, risk assessments and method declarations.

Knowledgeable about the many challenges facing farmers today, Lowri is keen to help farmers identify high-risk situations and recommend solutions to help make Welsh farms safer places to work.

### THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF

Llŷr's family farm runs to 350 acres owned and 100 acres rented. The land is very exposed, with soil mainly clay loam and shale outcrops. Ten percent is cropped and re-seeded every year and animals are housed in winter. The stock includes 80 spring and 30 autumn calving suckler cows including 40 pedigree Limousins, plus 650 Suffolk cross ewes put to Beltex cross Texel rams.

Stock quality and genetics, good pasture management and making the most of home-grown feeds have been some of the key areas Llŷr has targeted for improvement.

**BGS Welsh Grassland Farmer  
of the Year 2010**

### THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF

Llyr was raised on a beef and sheep family farm near Lampeter. In 2016, Llyr took over a farm near Llandysul with his wife and three children. The farm comprises of up to 150 cattle and a flock of 200 ewes. All cattle are sold as stores through local markets whilst the lambs are taken to Dunbia.

Llyr currently works as a Health, Safety & Environment Advisor and also runs a consultancy business servicing all business-related sectors including agricultural businesses. With 13 years' experience in health & safety management, Llyr can provide impartial but constructive feedback and is eager to encourage Welsh farms to achieve safer working environments.

### THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF

Malcom runs a 150 acre farm within a NVZ area including 70 acres of combinable crops. He currently rears over 2,000 turkeys per annum in traditional farm buildings and has more than 40 years' experience in the field. Because the turkey enterprise is seasonal, Malcom's organisational and management skills are key to the business' success. He also keeps 150 mainly Lleyn cross ewes and buys in, rears and finishes around 70 dairy cross cattle throughout the year.

Malcolm puts great emphasis on animal health and is constantly vigilant for any signs of disease or ill health. He believes that having a plan of action in place at all times is key to dealing with any issues that may arise.





**MARK DAVIES**  
The Meadows (Montgomeryshire)

**Key Sectors:**



**Specialisms or interests:**

Developing people and profitable businesses



**MATT SWARBICK**  
Henbant (Llŷn and Snowdonia)

**Key Sectors:**



**Specialisms or interests:**

Micro Dairy, Permaculture, Holistic Management, Agroforestry, Tourism



**MEIRION JONES**  
Tŷ Llwyd (Carmarthenshire)

**Key Sectors:**



**Specialisms or interests:**

Share farming, Early lambing



**NEIL STODDART**  
Nantygwynau (Carmarthenshire)

**Key Sectors:**



**Specialisms or interests:**

Land management, Environmental projects

**THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF**

Mark runs a mixed 250 acre lowland farm consisting of 200 acres of arable land, 16,000 free range hens and two small solar units. After returning home from University, Mark was given full financial management and responsibility of the farm. He used his initiative to turn a struggling family business around through improved management, record keeping and diversification. Mark has over 15 years' experience in the poultry sector and set up his poultry enterprise with little knowledge and guidance therefore had to learn by doing. He successfully set up one of the first commercial free range hen units producing speciality coloured eggs.

Mark has also worked as an Agrisgôp leader and has a variety of networks which he's built over the years. Mark believes that research is key to business success and is keen to help people develop themselves and their businesses.

**THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF**

A former TV producer and new entrant into farming, Matt began farming in 2012. Originally from Yorkshire, Matt fell in love with Wales whilst studying and working here.

Passionate about the benefits of ecological small-sale farming, he uses permaculture and holistic management as design methods for his 80-acre farm. Although he has only been doing this for seven years, the farm is becoming a sound example of ecological focused approach to small-scale farming. Constantly working to make the farm more resilient and productive whilst also focusing on being regenerative, Matt can provide guidance to farmers wanting to make their businesses more sustainable and productive.

A diversified farm, income primarily comes from tourism; micro-dairy; sheep; beef; forestry; eggs and market gardening, all of which are done on small but profitable and productive scales. Matt believes that it is this diversity that enables him to make an income from a small farm.

**THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF**

From 2015-2017, Meirion was involved in a successful share farming agreement. Since his young business partner moved on, he is now in a new joint venture which was set up in November 2017. Together with his business partner, the 700 acre holding has 1,100 ewes with 200 replacements and 100 store cattle bought in at 10-12 months old and sold at 20 months old. They also contract rear 50 Friesian heifers and have invested in renewable energy.

The farm has undergone a significant improvement programme of land drainage and reclamation, fencing and erecting buildings to improve the overall output and reduce input costs.

**British Farming Awards Farming Partnership of the Year 2016**

**THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF**

Neil farms a 50 acre holding. He has 150 cross bred ewes and pedigree North Country Cheviot sheep and contract rears 40 suckler cattle during winter. With 30 years' experience in forestry operations, his knowledge includes tree safety, public access, community agreements, partnership working, plus planting, tree maintenance and timber harvesting.

His environmental projects include large scale peat restoration, restoration of ancient natural woodland habitat, and the management of designated sites.

Recreational work includes managing public access and CROW dedicated land, the provision of mountain bike trails and a visitor centre.



**PETER WILLIAMS**  
Great House Farm (Monmouthshire)

**Key Sectors:**



**Specialisms or interests:**

Animal husbandry, Diversification



**PHIL MORGAN**  
Plas y Wenallt (Ceredigion)

**Key Sectors:**



**Specialisms or interests:**

Woodland management, Continuous Cover Forestry (CCF), New planting



**PHILLIP JONES**  
Lan Farm (Carmarthenshire)

**Key Sectors:**



**Specialisms or interests:**

Maximising grass to drive income, Pedigree breeding



**RHIDIAN GLYN**  
Rhiwgriafol (Montgomeryshire)

**Key Sectors:**



**Specialisms or interests:**

Rotational Grazing, Contract Heifer Rearing, New Entrants, Farm Business Planning

**THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF**

Peter, a former Farming Connect demonstration farmer, has 170 acres of owned land and 100 acres rented. He keeps 30 cross bred suckler cows and 400 ewes.

He has also introduced some trending diversification options including camping and hosting small festivals.

The farm includes 20 acres of woodland and cereal and green crop is grown for livestock feed.

Peter strongly believes in taking time to step back from the business to reflect in order to recognise elements of the enterprise which aren't working.

**THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF**

Phil owns a 27-acre woodland near Aberystwyth in partnership with another joint owner and also leases a further 136-acre woodland near Cwm Rheidol. Both are mixed species, conifer and broadleaved woodlands and are PAWS under restoration.

He has over 30 years of experience in the Welsh timber and forestry industries as well as in the developing new markets for woodfuel and carbon. A large part of his work is involved directly with farmers, planting new woodlands and managing existing woodlands on farms in Wales.

Phil understands the complexities of managing smaller woodlands and the need for profit from woodland on farms. He believes that a combination of cost-effective working, appropriate machinery, the new carbon market, payments for public goods and ecosystem services can make small woodlands profitable and enhance the value of farms.

**THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF**

Phillip, a former Farming Connect demonstration farmer, has an upland farm which extends to 400 acres, including 200 acres rented. He has farmed organically since 2006, with 100 organic suckler cows and followers, mostly Limousin crosses with total stock running at around 200. He has improved genetics by using better bulls and AI. Tack sheep are taken over the winter.

Phillip's grassland management has improved significantly and the farm is self-sufficient in protein through red clover leys. He has been able to save money on concentrates through targeted reseeding.

**Farmers Weekly Beef Farmer  
of the Year 2013**

**THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF**

Rhidian began his career in agriculture as an animal feed sales representative. In 2008, he started out by renting nine acres of poor grazing land for 15 Welsh Mountain ewes, and followed by taking on any grazing land which became available in the local area.

In 2014, Rhidian secured a 10-year farm business tenancy on a 530-acre hill farm and also holds an 11-month grazing license on 160 acres near the main holding. The flock has now grown to 900 ewes and 250 replacements. Rhidian also started a new heifer rearing enterprise in 2014, receiving batches of 110 calves and rearing them for 16 months, meaning there are 220 heifers grazing rotationally over summer period.

Rhidian puts great emphasis on improving efficiency within his business, using performance recording to maximise the production of his flock and rotational grazing to help improve the profitability and productivity of his land.

**Gold Winner of the New Entrant Award:  
Against All Odds, British Farming Awards 2018**





**RHYS EDWARDS**  
Hendre Ifan Goch Farm (Bridgend)

**Key Sectors:**



**Specialisms or interests:**

Genetics, Diversification, Tourism, EID, Renewable energy, Benchmarking, Cost savings



**RHYS WILLIAMS**  
Trygarn (Llŷn and Snowdonia)

**Key Sectors:**



**Specialisms or interests:**

Share farming



**RICHARD GIBB**  
Church Cottage (Glamorgan)

**Key Sectors:**



**Specialisms or interests:**

Multi cut grass silage, Grassland and forage management



**RICHARD ISAAC**  
Mynachdu Farm (Rhondda Cynon Taff)

**Key Sectors:**



**Specialisms or interests:**

Maximising grass to drive income, Pedigree breeding

**THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF**

Rhys farms full time with his father on the 250 acre family farm where they run a highly productive sheep enterprise consisting of 550 ewes and 150 ewe lambs. They use high EBV rams and maternal Aberfield rams to achieve the best genetics and also focus on production costs, animal health and DLWG. Rhys introduced EID to the business, which is now used for recording the weight gains & lambing data of the entire flock. Rhys says that using EID has improved the way the family farm. Rhys and his father also operate a rotational grazing system.

With a keen interest in innovation, Rhys diversified into renewable energy, installing a hydro generator and ground source heat pump which supplies all energy for the farm and farmhouse. This move has led to massive savings within the business. The business has also diversified into an extensive tourism venture including a 60 pitch touring caravan site, fishing lakes and wedding venue.

**THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF**

Rhys owns 200 acres and rents a further 1,400 acres as part of a share milking enterprise. He has developed a business that now milks 1,150 cows on a low cost spring calving system, with 910 cows owned outright. Rhys acknowledges that working in New Zealand exposed him to a system and way of life he was keen to replicate at home. He is always open to new ideas and through his work as a former Farming Connect demonstration farmer, he has implemented a programme to manage Johnes disease.

With a large business to run Rhys relies heavily on the skills of the team around him. He feels communication skills are therefore paramount and believes there is always something to learn from others.

**THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF**

With nearly 50 years' experience in many disciplines of agriculture, Richard is well equipped to help mentor other ruminant livestock farmers to become more efficient through grassland and forage management.

He has practical experience of working on beef, sheep, dairy and mixed arable farms but his main specialism is multi cut silage which Richard says has increased profits on a number of livestock farms. Richard believes that understanding the advantages and disadvantages of the system and how it effects your farm is the key.

An experienced mentor, Richard has great interpersonal skills and knows how to listen to people's concerns whilst appreciating the importance of confidentiality.

**THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF**

Richard has a 370 acre hill farm and rents a further 370 acres of lowland. The business has 50 pedigree Welsh Black suckler cattle, finished on grass and sold as stores at 18-24 months. He has a flock of 700 Texel cross Welsh and 600 pure bred South Wales Mountain sheep.

To improve grass leys, the business uses high sugar varieties, reducing the need for bought in feed. Richard uses EID to maintain accurate records as well as recording lamb weights to monitor productivity. He has installed wind turbines and solar panels.



**RICHARD RODERICK**  
Newton Farm (Brecknock)

**Key Sectors:**



**Specialisms or interests:**

Forage crops, Environmental schemes



**RICHARD ROGERS**  
Cefndderwen (Anglesey)

**Key Sectors:**



**Specialisms or interests:**

Joint ventures, Intensive rotational grazing system



**RICHARD TUDOR**  
Glanystwyth (Ceredigion)

**Key Sectors:**



**Specialisms or interests:**

Grassland management, Sheep production



**ROBB MERCHANT**  
Whitecastle Vineyard (Monmouthshire)

**Key Sectors:**



**Specialisms or interests:**

Wine production, Diversification on small scale farms

**THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF**

Richard has more than 30 years' experience of running an agricultural business, and is currently a Farming Connect demonstration farmer. The focus for his flock, which includes 1,050 Suffolk cross Mules and Aberfield cross breeding ewes and 260 ewe lambs, is to improve genetics and reduce costs through maximising the use of high quality forage. With his herd of 270 suckler cows, he concentrates on Stabiliser cows to improve maternal performance and to finish beef from forage.

The family has developed holiday and long-let properties as well as various renewable energy schemes.

Farmers Weekly Sheep Farmer of the Year 2015 and Dalehead/Waitrose Lamb Producer of the Year 2013

**THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF**

Former Farming Connect demonstration farmer Richard owns 600 acres with a further 150 acres on a Farm Business Tenancy. He has 800 breeding ewes and a joint venture in a dairy enterprise which has 360 crossbred cows on spring block calving, with an extended grazing system. In addition, 800 male Friesians are reared as calves on an intensive rotational grazing system and are finished at 24 months. Richard's focus has been to investigate the costings and profitability of different systems, resulting in a greater emphasis on grassland productivity and rotational grazing.

BGS British Grassland Farmer of the Year 2018

**THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF**

Richard owns 550 acres with a further 1,100 acres in shared ownership with his brother.

He decided to sell the farm's suckler cows some years ago, instead increasing sheep numbers to 1,850 ewes and 200 ewe lambs. Richard converted the farm to an organic system in 2011 but has since reverted to farming conventionally but has maintained many organic farming principles including growing red clover alongside home grown cereals.

Richard has employed more than 20 students during his time running the farm. He is eager to help young people develop securing a future within agriculture.

**THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF**

As the current chairman of the Welsh Vineyard Association, Robb has a passion for the growing of quality grapes and the production of quality Welsh Wine. Robb is supported by his wife Nicola on their 5 acre vineyard that is now one of Wales's premier wine producers. They also have a CL Caravan site, a 16th Century barn which is used for large group events and a cellar door/shop that's open for food and wine tasting.

Robb often gives talks on living on 10 acres or less and diversification on small scale farms. Robb is adamant that the skills he has developed over the years were vital in setting up White Castle Vineyard. Robb is keen to use his skills in a constructive way to improve understanding, confidence & performance.





**ROBERT POWELL**  
Blaenbwch (Radnorshire)

**Key Sectors:**



**Specialisms or interests:**

Paddock grazing, Growing root crops



**ROMEO SARRA**  
Peepout Farm (Pembrokeshire)

**Key Sectors:**



**Specialisms or interests:**

Soils, Potatoes, Field scale horticulture



**SIÂN BUSHELL**  
Pembrokeshire

**Key Sectors:**



**Specialisms or interests:**

Succession



**SION IFANS**  
Hen Dŷ Brynuchaf (Meirionnydd)

**Key Sectors:**



**Specialisms or interests:**

Monitoring and improving flock performance using EID, Benchmarking sheep KPIs

**THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF**

Former Farming Connect demonstration farmer Robert has 680 acres on which he finishes Welsh Black cattle. He keeps 2,200 ewes plus 500 ewe lambs – a mixture of Aberdale, Aberfield, Brecknock Hill Cheviot and Eppynt Hardy and plans to further increase crossbreed numbers. He has introduced paddock grazing systems and reduced the cost of winter feed by growing more swedes, fodder beet and stubble turnips; and the newly planted leys either contain chicory, plantain or a herbal mix. He also undertakes contract fencing, ploughing and sowing.

Robert believes that being open to change is vital for business success. He says, just because something has always been done a certain way, does not mean it cannot be improved upon.

**THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF**

Romeo's organic holding extends to 60 acres. Originally a small dairy farm, 40 acres are now used for three to four year rotations for potatoes or brassicas, vegetable crops and fertility crops or grass. Romeo also grows summer salad crops.

He markets his produce through social media, selling boxed vegetables delivered or collected from the farm, but also sells via a local wholesaler.

His skills and experience cover all practical aspects of horticultural production, including land selection, cultivation, planting, seeding, propagation, weeding and harvesting along with advising on associated equipment, pests and disease, and sourcing seeds and plants.

**THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF**

For the last 12 years, Siân has worked throughout the UK and Ireland as a Succession Facilitator. Pembrokeshire born and bred, Siân is a farmer's daughter and ran a successful dairy farming business for over 25 years, where she experienced succession issues at first hand.

In 2006, Siân travelled to Australia to be trained by Lyn Sykes, a well-known expert on succession before setting up her own business. A trained facilitator, Siân runs succession courses for farming families across the country to support them through the often difficult and stressful process of farm succession.

Siân possesses good communication and presentation skills and has the ability to motivate and inspire others to start the succession conversation. Equipped with good organisational skills, Siân enjoys new challenges and developing new ideas.

*Siân works slightly differently to our other mentors. Instead of 15 hours of mentoring, Siân offers a one day meeting and follow up report.*

**THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF**

Sion and his wife are tenants on a 49ha Powys County Council farm and he also works with his wife's family farming 365ha of hill land. They farm 900 Welsh Mountain Ewes and have a flock of 320 Romney Ewes and Romney Aberfield crosses. He also rears between 20-25 calves per year, selling at 15-16 months as breeding heifers.

Sion was the TAG Project Co-ordinator on behalf of Menter a Busnes for 6 years and has been performance recording the flock on his farm using EID service since 2009. As a mentor, Sion can share extensive knowledge and understanding with businesses using EID for the first time as well as those who have already established systems and wish to use them more effectively.



**TEIFI DAVIES**  
Llwynhelyg (Ceredigion)



#### Key Sectors:



#### Specialisms or interests:

Farm diversification, Farm gate retail



**TERRIG MORGAN**  
Carreg y Llech (Flintshire)



#### Key Sectors:



#### Specialisms or interests:

Succession planning, Grass growing, Business skills



**TIM PRICHARD**  
Castellau Fawr Farm (Glamorgan)

#### Key Sectors:



#### Specialisms or interests:

Breeding pedigree sheep, Artificial insemination in sheep



**TONY DAVIES**  
Henfron (Radnorshire)

#### Key Sectors:



#### Specialisms or interests:

Renewable energy

### THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF

Under the management of Teifi, and his partner Jennifer (who is also a mentor), the family farm has grown from 22.5 acres to 100 acres through purchase and renting. They combine their time between farming 100 acres and a herd of 50-60 cattle and their Farm Shop enterprise specialising in Welsh food and drink. The farm shop business, Llwynhelyg Farm Shop, has enabled them to stay on the family farm and has led to many successes in the Wales True Taste awards and UK local business awards. They are currently holders of 'The Best Independent Retailer 2016 – Wales' award.

Teifi has worked in the food & farming industry since leaving school, and then moving to a product development role, before returning to the family farm.

### THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF

Terrig, a former Farming Connect demonstration farmer owns 180 acres and rents 267 acres, including 35 acres of winter wheat grown for stock feed. A new entrant to dairying in the early 80s, Terrig now has 225 cows and 140 followers plus 67 male calves.

Although the industry has changed, Terrig feels his experience of discipline and focus are still relevant and he continues to produce annual cash flow and business plans. In recent years he has invested in a new cubicle shed, milking parlour, slurry store and solar panels.

### THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF

Tim owns 120 acres, of which 20 acres is woodland. He has 100 pedigree Charollais ewes and 50 yearlings, along with 125 commercial ewes. As well as keeping Blue Faced Leicester sheep, Tim decided to develop the Charollais breed within his flock. He has been using AI for 20 years and embryo transfer for 10 years to improve the genetics of the best ewes.

Tim does all the preparation for the procedures, injecting the embryo ewes twice a day for four days. He averaged 19 embryos per ewe in 2014 and 2015. The majority of the Charollais in the AI and embryo transfer programme lamb in early December.

### THE MENTOR – IN BRIEF

Tony is a fifth-generation tenant farmer of the fully organic Henfron and also has 680Ha of mountain farm land of which 80% is SSSI status. The farm management focuses on environmental improvements with Glastir Organic, Glastir Advanced and Glastir Woodland Creation agreements.

His passion for renewable energy diversification started 30 years ago, he has 20 years' experience with solar PV, small wind turbines and biomass heating systems with further expertise in off-grid and battery storage systems. With a track record of applying for, and claiming, both the 'Feed in Tariff' (FiTs) and the 'Renewable Heat Incentive' (RHI) Tony has the expertise to guide claimants through the process.





Always think outside the box and don't be afraid to do things differently. Just because you have always done something one way does not mean there isn't a better alternative available.



Share your problems, there are always people who have been through the same things.



Try to learn off other people's mistakes so you don't have to make them yourself.



Sign up for mentoring to look at your outcomes in detail and have someone there to keep your business on track.



It's easier to save a pound than to earn a pound. Control what you can and markets will take care of themselves.



Aim high, be the best you can be and make sure you listen to other like-minded individuals, especially those at the opposite ends of the supply chain.



Always keep an open mind to new possibilities.



Maximise the potential of your farm.



Diversification can bring in extra income on the farm, but be aware that some diversification's are very labour intensive (but great if you have a keen younger generation ready to join the farm business).



If you are starting for the first time or adapting a system, set clear targets in terms of outputs before making the investment/change.



The main limit to your farms productivity is your imagination.



If you have a dream, follow it through. With ambition, determination and hard work you can achieve anything.





Remember that learning is a continuous cycle, even now I learn something new about farming every year.



Always admit when things go wrong and learn from any mistakes. Failure is when you stop trying, not when you don't succeed.



I believe everyone deserves a chance to succeed, but on the way there is nothing wrong in getting a little help.



You need to understand, appreciate and collaborate with your market. Be prepared to be open, and to adapt to ever changing consumer trends and market demands.



You're never too old to learn.



Have a positive attitude at all times and try and mix with positive people. Take every opportunity to get off farm and learn from others.

## How to contact us

The Farming Connect Service Centre is open between the hours of 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday, excluding all public holidays.

Contact us...  
**Farming Connect**  
**08456 000 813**  
[www.gov.wales/farmingconnect](http://www.gov.wales/farmingconnect)

You will find detailed information about all Farming Connect services and can keep up to date with the wide range of events and knowledge transfer opportunities taking place throughout the year on our website.

Our team of local development officers will be pleased to provide you with support and guidance on how Farming Connect can benefit you and your business.

They will also provide support on how to access and benefit from the enhanced range of services. The contact details for all development officers are available on our website.

You can also follow us on:

**FarmingConnect**  
**@FarmingConnect**  
**@cyswlltffermio**

Registration for eligible individuals is a quick and simple process either online (please see web address above) or by contacting the Service Centre.

You will need to provide:

- Your Customer Reference Number (CRN) and your County Parish Holding (CPH) if applicable.

*All those registered under the previous Farming Connect Programme, i.e. before October 2015, will need to re-register.*



## TRAINING

Could our short training courses help you meet your business objectives?

Can we help you identify the training which would most benefit you, eligible family members and your workers?

Visit the Farming Connect website for a full list of courses and more information.



CEFNOGI MENTRAU AR Y CYD  
SUPPORTING JOINT VENTURES

**Are you a new entrant looking for a route into agriculture? Do you want to scale down or take a step back from the industry and provide an opportunity for a new entrant? Why not consider a joint venture?**

Venture is designed to help match farmers and landowners who are looking to step back from the industry with new entrants looking for a way into farming.

## VENTURE GET ON THE FARMING LADDER

Do you want to Venture into running your own farming business?

Venture matches new entrants with established landowners and provides business and legal guidance to set up a joint venture.

[www.gov.wales/farmingconnect](http://www.gov.wales/farmingconnect)



## FARMING CONNECT ADVISORY SERVICE

Are you a farmer or forester who would like advice on a particular issue affecting your business?

**One-to-one advice** – funded up to **80%**

**Group advice** – funded up to **100%**

### Topics of advice could include:

- **Business Advice** – a full business review, looking at future options and opportunities or a business appraisal, a here and now diagnostic of your business.
- **Growing more grass** – getting the soil right, reseeding techniques and use of fertilisers/slurry and farm yard manure
- **Nutrition** – balanced rations, silage analysis, feeding strategies
- **Heifer rearing** – costs of heifer rearing, protocols and growth targets
- **Improving milk quality** – reducing cell counts/mastitis, increasing milk protein, increasing butterfat

- **Disease control and animal health planning**
- **Improving fertility and genetics** – increasing conception rates, increasing submission rates, targets, economics and monitoring packages
- **Sustainable woodland management**
- **Adding value to farm timber and timber markets**
- **Growing trees and establishing a tree nursery to supply the market**

...or **ANY** eligible technical topic relevant to you/the group

Full information on the service is available on our website  
[www.gov.wales/farmingconnect](http://www.gov.wales/farmingconnect)