

# A Thin Blue Line

Challenges for rural policing. Widespread domestic abuse was a huge issue for policing in Norfolk, said the county's crime commissioner. Lorne Green, who was elected almost two years ago, told the 176<sup>th</sup> annual dinner of Stalham Farmers' Club about the scale of domestic abuse across the county.

He shocked the 115 members and guests at the Norfolk Mead Hotel, Coltishall, as he reported that between 40 and 50 complaints were being made each day or more than 5,800 last year. And the growing number of sexual abuse cases was also alarming too, he added.

Mr Green said that rural policing was one of his major challenges and that he had set up a task force to review progress in tackling crimes including illegal hare coursing. He also defended his decision to replace about 150 police and community support officers from the end of this month with 123 dedicated officers and staff, which would help to give the chief constable a county-wide resource to meet the modern policing challenge. By using and investing in technology to give police officers the tools to tackle the new types of crime, it would provide better protection for communities and society, he said. His robust defence of his strategy clearly impressed his audience.

And finally, he announced that he had persuaded the chief constable to invest in "mini white vans" equipped with cameras to tackle speeding on B and other minor roads.

Apparently, the "much-hated" camera vans seen on trunk roads like the A47 and A11 were too big for the B roads. Given the spate of speeding - and he quoted figures - and concerns on the smaller rural roads, a new fleet of white camera vans will be out there soon. Be warned, he told club members.

Earlier that same day, he had visited a pub in Coltishall and spoke to locals, who had expressed concerns about speeding through the village. "I will be raising that with the chief constable in my regular meeting with him," he said.

Mr Green was invited to present the club's annual awards and trophies.

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Double success for first-time trophy winners. Two first-time winners of the wheat and barley trophies were presented with certificates by Norfolk's police and crime commissioner Lorne Green.

For the first time since the barley trophy was presented in 1937, it was won by John Key, of Ormesby, and his son, Philip, with a sample of Maris Otter.

Mr Key was staggered that his sample had put the family farm, A J Key & Son on the superb trophy.

Another east Norfolk farmer, George Gay, of Mautby Farms, won the wheat cup with a sample of Grafton.

The judge of the annual competition, Chris Borrett, of Adams & Howling, was thanked for his efforts.

In the inter-club barley championship, the victor was William Mack, of Hempstead Hall, near Holt, with his Maris Otter sample.

Competition was close in the potato competition with the club's own webmaster, Tim Papworth, collecting the trophy on behalf of L F Papworth with a crop of Rooster. Robin Baines was runner-up and William Love, of Walcott Farms, took third place with a field of Fontane.

Beet competitions. With the campaign still continuing, it was announced that the Cantley Cup for best overall performance would be presented at the annual farm walk. Meanwhile, the hotly-contested whole crop award, judging by Ken Matthews, of the Stoke Ferry Agricultural Society, went to Alan and Geoffrey Beck, of C N Beck and Sons. Nigel Cooke, of Oby, was runner-up – another first-time entrant – and Andrew Alston, of Catfield, was third.

In the best two-acre, John Tallwin, of Hickling, persuaded his son James, who had apparently done all the work, to receive the trophy from Mr Green. CN Beck was runner-up and Andrew Alston, of Catfield, was also third.

Grain results - Wheat - 1 Mautby Farms, Grafton; 2 Milligen McLeod (Skyfall); 3 HBS Farms (Costello).

Barley - 1 A J Key & Son (Maris Otter); 2 Milligen McLeod; 3 R Cooke & Sons (Concerto).

### Support for Spring Fling.

The club presented a cheque for £300 to Greg Smith, chief executive of the Royal Norfolk Agricultural Association, to support the long-running Spring Fling event. This was started in 2000 and now attracts around 5,000 children and their parents to the one-day event at the Norfolk showground. And the next Spring Fling takes place on Tuesday, April 10.

Outstanding award. An outstanding member was presented with one of the club's top awards, the E H Wenn President's Trophy.

At the 2018 annual dinner, retiring chairman Jonathan Deane told the 115 members and guests that it had been decided to awarded the trophy from time to time to mark an outstanding contribution to the club.

He said the latest winner had been a great supporter of the club's competitions for more than a quarter of a century. And Stewart Marsh, who managed the late George Milligen's farm at Easton Ruston since 1992, had won 17 club trophies over the years. And in more recent years, he had continued his run of success with Mr Milligen's nephew, John McLeod.

This had included a total of 13 successes in the grain competition, with eight barley and five wheat championships, two in the best two-acre and two championships in the whole beet crop. In addition, he produced the first winning sample for the new inter-club supreme barley championship against Holt & District Farmers' Club.

And in the 2017 awards Mr Marsh was runner-up in both the wheat and barley sections.

In presenting the trophy, he wished Mr Marsh a long and happy retirement.

The EH Wenn Trophy was re-presented by Jennifer Grier and has since been won by the late Frank Read in 2012, Ken Leggett, Tim Papworth and in 2015, potato judge Denis Walsh.