



JOHN EDGAR TRUST

Spring 2025 Newsletter

A welcome from the chairman



2024 proved a demanding year for many with prolonged periods of wet weather proving challenging for all sectors within the industry as well as the changes in policies implemented by the new government. However, with challenge comes opportunity and I believe 2025 will push businesses to look at long term strategies, focus on efficiencies and prompt conversations to drive farm businesses forwards – something as an industry perhaps we have been guilty of delaying.

For JET, 2025 will focus on the next management course which will take place this Winter. I thoroughly enjoy the run up to the start of the course as it gives us, the organising committee, the opportunity to meet the next generation of farm managers who will be the driving force that will challenge and push our industry forwards. I look forward to reading the applications and meeting the shortlisted candidates to hear about their passion and vision for the future of farming.

2025 is set to be a busy year again with the quiz and farm walk taking place as well as the application process for the next course. Please do encourage anyone you feel would benefit from the JET experience to come along to the farm walk or visit the website for more details.

I would like to wish everyone good health and all the best for the coming farming year!

George Hood, Chairman of JET Organising Committee



JET Course Update

2025-2026 Course

We are pleased to announce that applications for the 2025-2026 JET course are now open and the application form can be accessed via the JET website, , which can be accessed via: <https://johndegartrust.org.uk/>

We will be following a similar structure to previous courses, with the residential training involving:

- a five-day tutored course at the RAU, Cirencester
- a four-day project-based case study module based at the RAU, Cirencester
- a second four-day project-based case study module based at Wallops Woods Holiday Cottages in Hampshire

The course is run by Chris Padfield, who has a challenging but inspiring line up of farm visits, guest speakers and activities for the successful candidates of this year's course. We would encourage all alumni to direct anybody they feel would benefit from the JET course to look at the updated JET website.

The farm walk also provides an excellent opportunity for interested candidates to meet JET alumni and find out more about what the course can offer. Course dates for 2025-2026 can be found on the back page of this newsletter. The application deadline is **25th May 2025**. We welcome any enquires regarding the course and look forward to receiving this year's applications.

In Brief

The JET committee would like to extend our thanks to all those that came along to support the biennial JET quiz on 7th February. There was some healthy competition between the teams with some high scoring rounds and some rounds best forgotten!! The raffle was a great success and overall the night raised £500 for the Trust. Thank you to all who attended and those that made the evening possible.



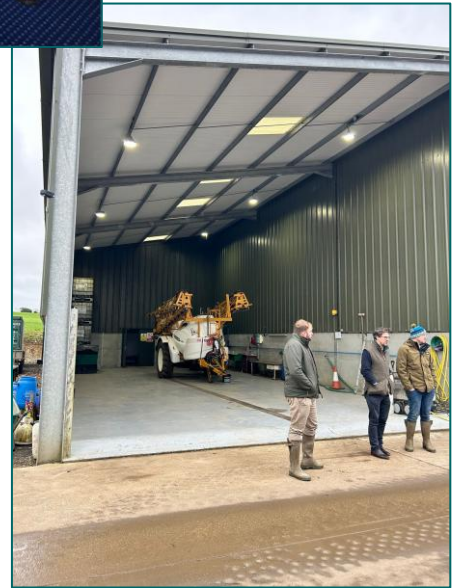
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2023-2024 Course

In Photos

2023-2024 saw the completion of another successful JET course, with 12 excellent delegates completing the course. We hope you enjoy the photos of the delegates time on the course.





John Parker – A tribute

John Parker

1931-2024

John Parker, one of the founding Trustees of JET, has died aged 93. He was well known by many through his involvement in most other “Hampshire Farming” organisations, but JET was one particularly close to his heart, and one thing that he did not retire from. He was a close friend of John Edgar, who had been a student with his father, Tom Parker, “the Guv’nor” on their farms near Fareham.

At their peak in the early 1990’s, the Parker family farmed over 4,000 acres, based mainly around Southwick and Wallops Wood, but also in Cornwall. It was a mixed farming business, with cereal crops grown to feed the dairy herds, egg laying hens and sheep flocks, with cash crops of potatoes, sugar beet, brussels sprouts and daffodils also grown. Most of the milk and some eggs were retailed via the dairy and doorstep deliveries in Fareham, Gosport and further afield.

John was best man at John Edgar’s wedding to Angela Green (who also became a founder Trustee of JET) in September 1954 – prior to this he was on a Nuffield Farming Scholarship trip to North America and was left in no doubt that he had to be back home in time! Sparked by that Nuffield trip, travel and education became a special interest. It was probably on this trip that he realised the powerful benefits of learning from one’s peers and developing friendships as a result; life-changing to both career and personal life.

When John Edgar died suddenly aged 48 in 1970, John Parker, with a group of friends started fundraising in his memory. In 1971, the John Edgar Memorial Trust held its first course for young people involved in Hampshire farming, taking their first steps in management responsibilities. 53 years later the number of John Edgar scholars now stands at over 350– testament to both John’s foresight and interest in education, and all of those people whose efforts over the years have built the Trust into what we have today.



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John Parker – A tribute

Farming was John's career and his passion – not uncommon characteristics in this part of the world. There weren't many parts of the county that he didn't know much about, walked or drove over, either with a gun in hand or on a farm walk with the Fareham and Hants Farmers Club. He was Chairman and later President and had only recently stepped down as a Trustee.

He took this passion far beyond the county boundary, notably to London where he was a member of the Whitehall Farmers Club for 69 years. Chairman in 1983 and then Trustee and Vice-President, John cherished the friendships he made there as much as he did wherever he met new people. Contacts made here led to involvement in several national organisations, such as the Royal Agricultural Societies, the Grassland Research Institute (Chairman), and the Agriculture and Food Research Council. It was at the GRI, that he met and became friends with John Alliston – a pivotal relationship that led to the JET courses being run at the RAU Cirencester by John and James Jones.

The pinnacle of John Parker's career was probably being asked to chair the board of the Duke of Westminster's Grosvenor Farms in Cheshire. He did this for 10 years, during which time he saw the launch of the Cogent dairy breeding programme and the first sexed cattle semen commercially produced in the UK.

Whilst age started to limit John's attendance at many of the gatherings that he would often attend, his interest in those groups never did. He was delighted that John Edgar's daughter Gillie Strang joined the Trustees as did his own daughter Katherine, to continue the job that John Edgar's friends started back in 1970.



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Patrick Piper – A tribute

Patrick Piper

1942-2023

Many of the alumni will remember our Hon Treasurer, Patrick Piper and will be aware of his sad passing in 2023.

Patrick influenced the Trust's finances for over twenty-five years. His shrewd judgement with the investments and control over expenditure ensured that the Trust not only lived within its means, but continued to deliver its charitable aims. His legacy is a sound financial position.

People were important to Patrick, this is very much in the DNA of the Trust and his governance contributed to this.

Patrick spent his senior career with Barclays as a bank manager in Southampton, the Isle of Wight and Winchester, where he was well respected by a large portfolio of agricultural clients. He supported entrepreneurial and dynamic accounts. He was also gregarious and good company to be with, "Paddy for a Party" was an accurate reputation.

The Trust owes Patrick a huge debt of gratitude for his skill and dedication over many years.



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Life after JET – Was it worth it?

By Will Haupt

It doesn't feel like it, but ten years have passed since I undertook the John Edgar Course. I still fondly remember arriving at the Royal Agricultural University (College back then) on the first Sunday, full of excitement and trepidation for what lay ahead. The course needed no introduction and was highly regarded in the Hampshire area. It was a fantastic three weeks, and I think it was hugely beneficial when the catchment was opened in subsequent years to allow others from further afield to benefit from the same opportunity.

It remains a pivotal time in my career and without the support of organisations and opportunities like this, I often wonder how different things could look. I was an assistant manager then, eager to work out the next step and how I might get there. I left the course with a new sense of direction and confidence, the interactions and challenges of the course giving me the drive to look for new opportunities and progress my career.

Shortly after completing the course I progressed to the role of Farm Manager for my employer at the time, then took on a larger role two years later. Following the success of these roles, I felt confident to look for the next challenge and took the opportunity available to move to my current role of Farm Manager at the Bedford Estates, Woburn.

With this role comes the responsibility of managing a large team across a substantial arable area, as well as a pedigree cattle enterprise, multiple stewardship schemes, contract farming agreements and contracting work. More recently the business has diversified further with a commercial grain storage and third-party cleaning enterprise following a significant investment in grain storage in 2023. I am grateful to have the opportunity to work with a forward thinking and versatile business and it continues to be a fantastic and fulfilling role, working as one of the senior management team across such a diverse estate.

It has been so important to take some time out each year and continue with self-development, both for its personal benefit and for what it delivers back to the role. In recent years, I've been able to complete the BASIS Diploma in Agronomy over the winter months. Then in 2021, I was fortunate to be offered a place on the Worshipful Company of Farmers ACABM course. Another great course that complements the core values set out in JET. Then, in 2023, I was honoured to be awarded the FW Farm Manager of the Year title.

The JET course has been valuable for kickstarting my career development and building the resilience and confidence one needs in farming. I remain grateful for the opportunities and hope that the industry prospers and that the years ahead are as personally fulfilling.



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JET – Diary Dates & Information

JET Farm Walk

7th May 2025

3.00pm – 6.30pm

The farm walk this year will kindly be hosted by Farleigh Wallop Estate, Basingstoke, RG25 2HT

There will be a talk and farm walk by the team at Farleigh Wallop followed by a BBQ and drinks

Tickets: £35/head to inc. refreshments

To book a space please visit:

[John Edgar Trust - Farm Walk 7th May 2025 Tickets, Wed, May 7, 2025 at 3:00 PM | Eventbrite](#)

Course dates

Monday 1st – Friday 5th December 2025

Monday 12th – Thursday 15th January 2026

Monday 2nd – Thursday 5th February 2026

For further information please visit:

<http://johnedgartrust.org.uk/applications/>



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