

# REGIONAL NEWS SOUTH EAST

Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Kent, Oxfordshire, Surrey, Sussex



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## A topical talk on homes and High Speed 2, concerns over recycling centre cuts, raspberry-picking robots and a sailing simulation

### MP PRAISES CLA'S LOBBYING INFLUENCE AT BUCKS COUNTY SHOW

Infrastructure, development and the controversial High Speed 2 rail project were among the topics covered by MP David Lidington at the CLA's Bucks County Show stand.

Mr Lidington, who represents Aylesbury, gave an update to CLA members at the show, held in Weedon Park. He told the packed audience that Defra policy around payments for public goods has been shaped by the CLA and its lobbying, and also talked about the Cambridge, Milton Keynes and Oxford corridor, where there are plans for one million new homes by 2050.

The CLA South East team welcomed dozens of members to the show stand across the day, offering advice, help and plenty of tea, supported by Freeths Solicitors.

### CONCERNS OVER FLY-TIPPING

CLA South East has raised concerns that proposals to close and cut the opening hours of recycling centres, as well as introducing charges for certain items, may lead to an increase in fly-tipping in the Thames Valley area.

It comes as Buckinghamshire County Council launches a public consultation into potentially permanently closing at least one site, with the preferred option being Bledlow, in a bid to save money.

The authority is also considering cutting opening hours at other centres, and proposing new charges for handling certain items.

Much good work is being done in the county to help try and bring offenders to justice. More than 650 fly-tippers have been prosecuted in Buckinghamshire over the last

15 years, and the council prides itself on having one of the highest prosecution success rates in England.

But more than 11,000 fly-tipping cases – six a day on average – have blighted the countryside in the last five years alone, costing tax-payers £500,000 a year in clear-up costs, and it would be a huge shame if these numbers were to grow even bigger as a result of cuts to recycling centre services.

The consultation runs until midnight on 22 October. To take part visit the council website and search for 'hrc review'.

### WOODLANDS WORKING FOR THE FUTURE – A CONFERENCE ON 21ST CENTURY WOODLAND MANAGEMENT

Productivity, collaboration and innovation are the themes for this autumn's woodland management conference, run by the CLA South East team.

Held at Newbury Racecourse, the day will feature talks and workshops by industry leaders and experts on topics such as new technologies, future-proofing and tree health.

Speakers will include Tom Barnes from Vastern Timber and Dougal Driver from Grown in Britain, who will demonstrate how end users, producers and suppliers work together, both now and in the future.

The conference, kindly supported by Pryor & Rickett Silviculture and Forest Holidays, will also host a tech hub, and offer

funding information and practical advice.

It is organised in partnership with the Forestry Commission and Grown in Britain, and runs from 8.30am to 3.30pm on Thursday 11 October.

Tickets cost £45 plus VAT for CLA members and Grown in Britain licence holders, and £60 plus VAT for non-members. To book visit the CLA website.

### FRUIT GROWER SIGNS UP TO TEST RASPBERRY HARVESTING ROBOT SYSTEM

Innovative robots could soon be picking raspberries in the South East after a soft-fruit grower signed up to test a new harvesting system.

CLA South East member Hall Hunter Partnership, which has farms and sites in Surrey, Berkshire and West Sussex, has agreed to field test high-tech harvesting robots.

The family-run business has signed an agreement with University of Plymouth spinout Fieldwork Robotics. The latter is led by lecturer in robotics Dr Martin Stoelen, and is currently creating



DR MARTIN STOELLEN WITH ANOTHER ROBOTIC ARM, THIS ONE BEING DEVELOPED TO PICK CAULIFLOWERS

MP DAVID LIDINGTON TALKING ON THE CLA STAND AT THE BUCKS COUNTY SHOW



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## ROBOTS COULD SOON BE PICKING SOFT FRUIT UNDER A NEW AGREEMENT

machines capable of picking a range of fruit and vegetables.

The collaboration will enable the technology to be field tested in a range of environments, such as fields and polytunnels, under different climatic and light conditions. Field tests could start later this year.

Once the technology has been successfully field tested it can be easily adapted for other fruit and vegetables.

Hall Hunter Partnership chief operating officer David Green said: "HHP has always led the soft fruit industry in pushing forward productivity and quality standards on our farms and nurseries.

"This partnership with Fieldwork Robotics is an exciting new development to pioneer the harvesting of raspberries robotically at a commercial scale, we are looking forward to our first human-free hectare to be picked together."

## POTASH FARM WALK AND SAILING SIMULATION

CLA South East members have enjoyed a number of social activities over the summer season.

A group sampled local wines and cheeses, paired with cobnut chutneys and cobnut cheese biscuits produced by Potash Farm, during a recent visit to the business.

Kentish Cobnuts, a type of cultivated hazelnut traditionally grown in the county, have long been prized as a delicacy. First grown in 1830, the Kentish Cobnut has been in decline for some time and this was a rare opportunity to visit one of the estates that grows and harvests them.

By kind invitation of Alexander Hunt, Chairman of the Kentish Cobnut Association, members took

part in a walk around Potash Farm, situated in St Mary's Platt, near Sevenoaks, which derives its name from cobnut production.

Mr Hunt spoke about the evolution of the business and the ranges that Potash Farm is now famous for. Meanwhile it was plain sailing for a group of members as they got to grips with a simulator in Portsmouth.

They visited the headquarters of Ineos Team UK (formerly Land Rover BAR) and its famous 'Tech Deck'.

Ineos Team UK was formed in 2018 with the aim of bringing the America's Cup home to Britain. During the trip members viewed a variety of exhibits relating to the 35th, and most recent, America's Cup, and tried out the sailing

simulator.

With one member making a six-hour round trip to visit, it was certainly an interesting afternoon for those in attendance.

## ENEWS ALERT

Each month, on or around the 25th day, we send out enews to our members in the South East, with localised mailings for Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, another for Buckinghamshire, Berkshire and Oxfordshire, and a third for Kent, Sussex and Surrey.

A few members might not be receiving these newsletters, either due to spam filters or if you have changed your email address. If you think you are not getting them please check your junk folders or get in touch with the office. ■

## EVENTS DIARY

### 2 October

We will be running a debate, Land Value Capture: What's it Worth?, at The Refectory, Guildford Cathedral, Stag Hill, Guildford, GU2 7UP, supported by Smith & Williamson. It runs from 5pm to 8pm. The debate will be chaired by Bridget Biddell, President of the CLA Surrey Branch and speakers will include chartered surveyor and Coverwood Lakes landowner Tim Metson, CLA Director of Policy and Advice Christopher Price, and Smith & Williamson partner Luke West.

### 30 October

Our wealth management and tax planning seminar will host the advisory team from Burfields House Wealth Management, who will delve into the detail of property investment versus equity investment, how tax can erode returns and how the impact of this can be minimised. It runs from 10am to 2pm at the St Clere Estate, Kemsing, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN15 6NL.

### 21 November

The CLA is delighted to be collaborating with the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors and ADAM Architecture for a seminar about adding value to your estate. It runs from 8.30am to 11am at Hotel Du Vin, Southgate Street, Winchester, Hampshire, SO23 9EF.

For more details and to book events, visit the CLA website.



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