

HOLT & DISTRICT FARMERS' CLUB

FOUNDED 1948

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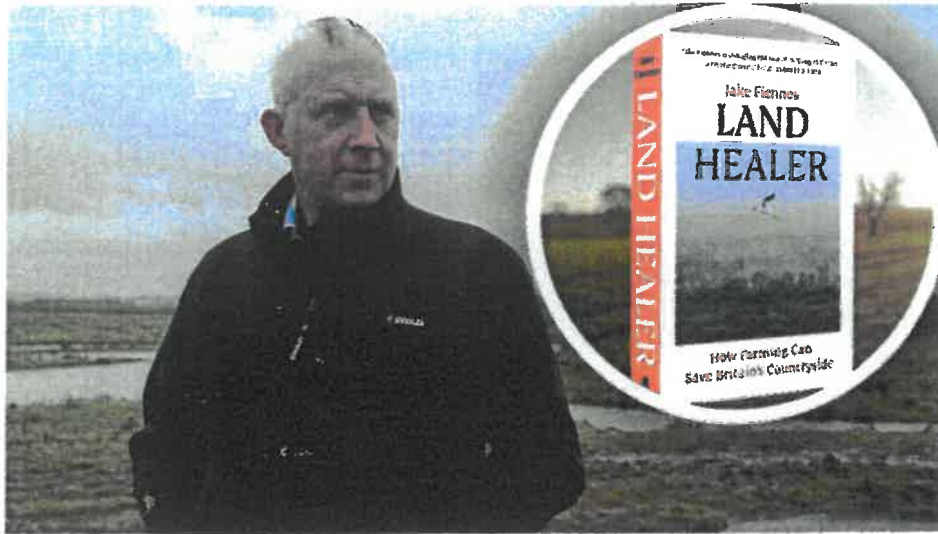
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CLUB MATTERS December 2022

"Thirty Years of Hurt" – that was the Three Lions football lyric sung at Euro '96 – well the pain is going to last at least twice as long after Saturday's result. Thirty years is also the length of time since **John Mack** and his late wife Joanna started their campaign to harness wind power along the Cromer Ridge between Baconsthorpe, West Beckham and Gresham. The original application was for four turbines which would each have been the same height – 66 metres to the tip of the blades – as the single one that has recently been erected at Pond Farm, Lower (upper ?) Bodham. John has overcome refusals and protest campaigns while going to appeal and to court on numerous occasions before finally winning the day – hats off to him. The same to his son David who has been behind several similar projects including the nearby one at Selbrigg closer to Holt where permission has just been gained for a larger turbine of 78 metres. In spite of these successes the future of onshore wind power is uncertain even though PM Rishi has said he is in favour. The Mack 'machine' is located at over 300 feet between **Roger Hall's** Mousehold Estate at Up Wood near Baconsthorpe and 'Beckham Palace', the former Erpingham Union Workhouse or 'Hospital'. It is also close to Hell Hole, an ancient marl pit where a neolithic flint axe was found on the footpath between Bodham Hill and North Barningham. As long as the rotating sails don't interfere with my TV reception a little more than a mile to the north then I can't complain.



I found it easy to pick a book for Christmas this year. Regenerative Farming has been a hot topic for a fair amount of time and last season we had Poul Hovesen and Nick Padwick tell us about their respective involvement with Nick inviting us to his operation at Ken Hill near Snettisham this summer. It remains a somewhat controversial system as was evident from the range of views evident amongst our own members. Jake Fiennes is a strong proponent and gave us an insight into his regenerative farming when he spoke to us five years ago. Soon afterwards he moved from Raveningham to Holkham as Director of Conservation and we were able to see some of his ideas taking shape on our trip there in 2019. He has now written *"Land Healer – How Farming Can Save Britain's Countryside"* amongst a number of similar books by authors like George Monbiot that touch on the subject – even Jeremy Clarkson has started some regenerative farming at Diddly Squat Farm in spite of Caleb's objections – he's also got a book out. If you prefer fiction you can stay with Holkham which Lady Anne Glenconner has featured in one of her novels; another one features Mustique and she has also published more of her racy memoirs *"Whatever Next ?"*.



Apologies for departing from our normal second Tuesday in the month and for clashing with Stalham's meeting at 7.30 *next Wednesday* but we are pleased to finally have **Jane Kenny** as our speaker. At least she won't have to compete with the World Cup semi-final against Morocco. She has been going great shakes since leaving Savills to become *Director of ADAS Rural* and it will be interesting to hear about her career and relevant topics. We are back to Tuesdays in the New Year, 7.30 at Holt Rugby Club, with *Kit Franklin from Harper Adams on Hands Free Farming on 10th January*, *Darren Gill* will tell us about *gundogs* on *21st February* (delayed a week to avoid Valentine's Day plus Norwich playing at home) and we end with *Professor Graham Moore, Director of The John Innes Institute*, telling us about *plant technology* on *14th March*. In the meantime I wish you all a Merry Christmas and Prosperous New Year.

Tim

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