

SMALLHOLDER



ASSOCIATIONS

NOT JUST FOR SMALLHOLDERS!

Smallholder groups provide a great way to meet like-minded people, share ideas, get training, and in some cases even share equipment. They are always looking to attract new members, so if you see one listed for your local area, then please get in touch, and be sure to tell them you found them via Home Farmer!

This listing has been compiled by using the Smallholder Groups listing at the Small Plot, Big Ideas blog (<http://www.smallplotbigideas.co.uk>) as a starting point.

Any additions or corrections to this information, or details of important news/events to be included in future, should be sent by email to Richard Thompson (webmaster@smallplotbigideas.co.uk). Please remember to mention Home Farmer when contacting any of these organisations!

CENTRAL SCOTLAND SMALLHOLDERS' ASSOCIATION

Link: <http://smallholders.webs.com/>
The CSSA is a group of aspiring and existing smallholders who get together to share knowledge, experiences, and socialise.

CEREDIGION SMALLHOLDERS AND PETS

Link: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/210460872390089/>
A facebook group that can be used for advice as well as selling/swapping livestock and pets, or for advertising your services related to smallholdings, farms and pets. This is a closed group, so new users must apply to join, but once approved, users can read all content and post as normal.

CHESHIRE SMALLHOLDERS' ASSOCIATION

Link: <http://www.cheshiresmallholders.org.uk/>
This is a group of small-scale hobby farmers, horse enthusiasts and countryside lovers. The livestock interests of members include sheep, goats, pigs, cattle, chickens, ducks and geese, while many also keep horses and ponies plus a few llamas and alpacas. Other interests include bees, and fruit and vegetable cultivation.

CORNISH ASSOCIATION OF SMALLHOLDERS AND PRODUCERS

Link: <http://www.cornishassociation-smallholdersandproducers.co.uk/>
A group of smallholders and craft producers in the south-west of England, which run the Lostwithiel Local Produce Market as a shared outlet for members to sell their fine produce and crafts locally at fair prices.

CUMBRIAN SMALLHOLDERS

Link: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/cumbriansmallholders>
A facebook group providing a place for Cumbrian smallholders to connect with others, share information and advertise stock for sale or wanted. This is a closed group, so new users must apply to join, but once approved, users can read all content and post as normal.

DERBYSHIRE SMALLHOLDERS' ASSOCIATION

Link: <http://www.derbyshiresmallholders.co.uk/>
The Derbyshire Smallholders' Association was formed in 2001 by a group of like-minded people, with the aim of providing an opportunity for fellow smallholders, and those with just an interest in smallholding, to network and to pass on skills and information.

DEVON ASSOCIATION OF SMALLHOLDERS (DASH)

Link: <http://www.devonsmallholders.co.uk/>
Telephone: 01237 405307
DASH is a friendly, non-profit-making organisation, which aims to provide its members with support and training in topics such as land management, welfare of livestock, horticulture, and safe use of machinery. DASH holds regular events, issues a bimonthly newsletter, and has a very active facebook page and a 'Members Only' area for advertisements on its website.

DYFED SMALLHOLDERS' ASSOCIATION

Link: <http://www.dyfedsmallholders.org.uk/>
The association was founded in 1986 and is one of the oldest smallholder groups in the UK. This group is for anyone who is interested in the countryside, whether you've got 200 acres or a window box for salad, the DSA has lots to offer.

Every year they run a busy schedule of social events, including specially arranged visits to sites and farm walks across Dyfed.

EAST ESSEX SMALLHOLDERS' GROUP

Link: <http://eastessexsmallholders.blogspot.co.uk/>
The group was formally constituted in July 2011 by a group of micro farmers who operate different sizes of 'smallholding'; some have a few backyard chickens, maybe grow a few fruit and vegetables, while others may have pigs or sheep.

EAST RIDING SMALLHOLDERS' SOCIETY

Link: <http://myweb.tiscali.co.uk/blacksmith/ers/>
A society of smallholders, 'home' farmers, small-scale agriculturalists, horticulturalists, self-sufficiency enthusiasts, country craftspeople, who all have rural interests or are motivated to make productive their own small portion of the Earth.

FENLAND SMALLHOLDERS' CLUB

Link: <http://www.fenlandsmallholders.org.uk/>
In 1976 a new club was formed and named Fenland Goatkeepers & Smallholders' Club, and forty years later the group are about to celebrate their 40th anniversary. In October 1994 the Club became the more general smallholders' group it is today. Since then the membership has grown to over 140 families spread throughout East Anglia and the East Midlands.

GUERNSEY SMALLHOLDERS

Link: <http://guernseysmallholders.weebly.com>
Guernsey Smallholders is a practical and social club that forms a network of people who can offer each other advice, support and help, and which also facilitates the exchange of produce, skills and ideas. The club holds social events, meetings and practical courses, and invites speakers to talk on topics of interest to members.

HERTS & ESSEX SMALLHOLDERS AND GARDENERS

Email: fonabyatt@waitrose.com
The Herts & Essex Smallholders and Gardeners group holds informal friendly meetings once a month. As well as the useful and interesting speakers at their regular meetings, there are also members with wide-ranging expertise on smallholding and gardening.

KENT SMALLHOLDERS

Link: <http://www.kentsmallholders.co.uk>
This group holds monthly meetings at Hadlow College with like-minded people who enjoy the countryside and the rural way of life, which are their only criteria for membership. Members come from all walks of life – some with land and animals, others with just a window box or an interest in crafts – but all come with a wide range of experience and knowledge to help those just starting out.

LINCOLNSHIRE SMALLHOLDING AND SELF-SUFFICIENCY CLUB

Link: <http://www.lsssc.org.uk/>
A very diverse group, ranging from those with a small vegetable plot, to those with a full-blown smallholding, and any number of levels of self-sufficiency in between. It doesn't matter if you are just giving your first thoughts to growing vegetables in your garden or on your allotment, or if you are perhaps thinking of having a few hens, the LSSSC is the place to come for help, advice and support.

NORFOLK SMALLHOLDERS' TRAINING GROUP

Link: <http://www.nstg.org.uk/>

A small charity based in Norfolk, set up by a group of volunteers, with members all over Norfolk (and beyond). Each month they organise low-cost training courses, and over the spring and summer they have visits to each other's holdings.

NORTH PENNINES SMALLHOLDERS

Link: <http://www.northpennines-smallholders.co.uk/>
This is a newly established group, which aims to bring together smallholders, gardeners and landowners from across the North Pennines and surrounding areas. The North Pennines Smallholders' group will provide regular events, and training and networking opportunities, to give people a chance to discuss issues of common concern, and hopefully have a bit of fun along the way.

NORTH SHROPSHIRE & BORDERS SMALLHOLDERS' GROUP

Link: <http://www.northshrop-smallholder.co.uk/>
The group always welcomes new members, so if you just have a window box, or several acres, why not come along to one of the meetings, enjoy an informative talk, and afterwards chat and exchange ideas with other like-minded people over tea and coffee. Meetings are held on the fourth Wednesday of each month at the Llanyblodwel & Porthywaen Memorial Institute.

NORTH YORKSHIRE SMALLHOLDERS' SOCIETY

Link: <http://www.smallholder.org.uk/>
If you keep sheep, pigs, hens or horses, or grow vegetables, or take part in any other small-farming activity, then this could be the society for you. You don't have to be a landowner or a business, just as long as you have an interest in rural activities that you are willing to share with others.

NORTHUMBRIA SMALLHOLDERS' ASSOCIATION

Link: <http://www.northumbriasmallholders.co.uk/>
A group of like-minded people from the North East of England, who enjoy the countryside and all that goes with it. The group was formed following a smallholders' course at Kirkley Hall College many years ago, and now offers a range of events throughout the year.

ROMFORD SMALLHOLDERS' SOCIETY

Link: <http://romfordsmallholders.wix.com/growyourown>
A friendly community that welcomes every gardener, from complete novices to prizewinners. They manage their own site on behalf of Havering Council, and currently have plots available starting from just 76 square metres.

SCOTTISH SMALLHOLDERS' ASSOCIATION

Link: <http://www.scottishsmallholder.com/>
With members from all over Scotland they organise talks and stage craft and social events. On a regular basis they publish a newsletter bursting with the latest news and information on useful topics. The membership package includes a bulk seed order in January, which means that members can get their seeds for half price. You don't even have to reside in Scotland to be a member!

SHROPSHIRE SMALLHOLDERS' GROUP

Link: <http://shropshiresmallholdersgroup.org/>
This is a non-profit-making organisation, which provides members with information and mutual

support in all aspects of smallholding. Members keep a variety of livestock, including chickens, geese, turkeys, sheep, goats, pigs and alpacas.

SMALL FARM TRAINING GROUP

Link: <http://www.sftg.co.uk/>
Based in Sussex, this group aims to enable members to learn better farming, smallholding and horticultural skills. Members are enthusiasts who want to know how to care for land, livestock and equipment in an efficient and professional way.

SOMERSET SMALLHOLDERS' ASSOCIATION

Link: <http://somensetsmallholders.org.uk/>
This association represents a diverse group, ranging from those with a garden and a few chickens, through to members who are totally self-sufficient. They hold meetings at various locations across the county. The meetings are opportunities to learn new skills from other members or invited experts and to share knowledge and experience with fellow smallholders.

SOUTH AND WEST WALES SMALLHOLDERS

Link: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/218380055007087/>
A facebook group for all those who have a smallholding in South or West Wales. You can advertise things for sale or wants, and also get answers to your questions. This is an open group, so all facebook users can read the content and post as normal without requiring approval to join first.

STAFFORDSHIRE SMALLHOLDERS' ASSOCIATION

Link: <http://www.staffsmallholders.info/>
A small but lively group of families and individuals who share an interest in the small-farming way of life. The declared aim of the association is "to improve the knowledge and skills of those interested in small-scale farming and the countryside". You don't need to have a farm, a smallholding, an allotment or even a window box to join.

SUFFOLK SMALLHOLDERS' SOCIETY

Link: <http://www.suffolksmallholders.co.uk/>
A non-profit-making group of like-minded people interested in smallholding, self-sufficiency, allotments, fruit and vegetable growing, and animal husbandry on a small scale. They have a varied membership, ranging from people with a tomato plant growing on the windowsill, to smallholders and small-farmers with tens of acres to keep them busy.

WEST SUSSEX SMALLHOLDERS' CLUB

Link: <http://www.westsussex-smallholdersclub.org.uk/>
Despite the name, this club serves West and East Sussex, Surrey and Hampshire, and they have regular meetings on the last Wednesday of every month. Members' activities include keeping just a couple of garden chickens and a window box of herbs, to making a living from a large piece of land that includes pigs, sheep and cattle.

WILTSHIRE SMALLHOLDERS' GROUP

Link: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/114115882077127/>
This is a facebook group for smallholders based in the Wiltshire area, which provides a place to talk about smallholding whether it be livestock or pets. This is a closed group, so new users must apply to join, but once approved, users can read all content and post as normal.

SMALLHOLDER EVENTS

Richard Thompson begins a **quarterly round-up** of what's going on in the **smallholder community**, including **events, news and listings**

CORNISH ASSOCIATION OF SMALLHOLDERS AND PRODUCERS

The group holds a regular, fortnightly, local-produce market at Lostwithiel Community Centre, where they have the finest of fresh local foods and hand-made crafts available. The market is open from 10am-1.30pm, and the upcoming market dates are:

- * Friday 1st, 15th and 29th April
- * Friday 13th and 27th May
- * Friday 10th and 24th June

DERBYSHIRE SMALLHOLDERS' ASSOCIATION

Events organised over the coming months include:

- * **CHANTAL BRYANT FROM SCARSDALE VETS – ANIMAL FIRST AID**
31st March
- * **RICHARD STANLEY FROM SMITH COOPERS ACCOUNTANTS – SMALLHOLDER BUSINESS ADVICE**
28th April
- * **VISIT TO BRIAN HAUGHTON'S LLAMAS**
30th June

DEVON ASSOCIATION OF SMALLHOLDERS (DASH)

DASH runs low-cost practical training courses to provide members with the knowledge and skills needed to run a successful smallholding. Here are details of some courses over the next few weeks:

- * **706-85 GOAT HUSBANDRY**
Sunday 10th April (10am-4pm)
£50 (£70 for non-members)
- * **707-58 BEGINNERS' DAIRY GOAT KEEPING**
Sunday 24th April (10am-4pm)
£50 (£70 for non-members)

- * **708-109 LIVING WITH LIVESTOCK – AN INTRODUCTION TO SHEEP, PIGS AND CATTLE**
Saturday 7th May (9.30am-4.45pm)
£75 (£95 for non-members)
- * **682-64 AN INTRODUCTION TO KEEPING SHEEP**
Sunday 8th May (10am-4pm)
£55 (£75 for non-members)
- * **685-97 INCUBATION, HATCHING AND REARING POULTRY**
Sunday 15th May (10am-4pm)
£55 (£75 for non-members)

To book your place on a course, please email training@devonsmallholders.co.uk, or telephone **07595 296 613** to check availability.

NORTH PENNINES SMALLHOLDERS

- * **INTRODUCTION TO THE RARE BREEDS SURVIVAL TRUST (RBST)**
Wednesday 16th March at 7pm
An informative presentation and talk from Ruth Dalton covering the work carried out by the Rare Breeds Survival Trust (RBST) to secure the future of our rare and native breeds of farm livestock. This event is free for NPS members, with a nominal charge for non-members. Topics to be covered at future events include:
 - * **Woodland management**
 - * **Weed control**
 - * **RSPB introduction to farmland birds**
 - * **Establishing and managing wild flower meadows**

NORTH SHROPSHIRE & BORDERS SMALLHOLDERS' GROUP

- * **KEEPING CHICKENS**
Wednesday 23rd March
Tim Smith will be giving a talk on keeping chickens, from rare breeds to ex-battery, with advice on how best to house them.

KENT SMALLHOLDERS

- * **SMALLHOLDERS' LIVESTOCK**
Wednesday 20th April
A panel of smallholders will answer your questions on pigs, goats, poultry, sheep, etc. Everyone's welcome to contribute to questions and answers. Meet in Room HG21 at Hadlow College at 7.30pm.
- * **BLINDLEY HEATH COUNTRY SHOW**
Sunday 1st and Monday 2nd May
The Kent Smallholders' stand will be at the Blindley Heath Country Show, Osney Lodge Farm Showground, Byers Lane, South Godstone, Surrey, RH9 8JH.
- * **HONEY BEE FAYRE AND AUCTION**
Sunday 8th May
The Kent Smallholders' stand will be at the Honey Bee Fayre and Auction at Yalding, from 10am-4.30pm, with free entrance and free parking. Run by the Yalding and District Beekeepers' Association. Please note that there will be live bee demonstrations.
- * **ORCHARD WALK**
Wednesday 18th May
Join us for an evening walk at Robert Mitchell Farms, Golding Hop Cold Store, Bewley Lane, Plaxtol, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN15 OPS.



– APRIL TO JUNE 2016

STOP PRESS!

NEW GROUP ESTABLISHED FOR NORTH PENNINES SMALLHOLDERS

A new group has been established to bring together smallholders in and around the North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The North Pennines Smallholders' Association will provide training, support and networking opportunities, to give people a chance to discuss issues of common concern, and also have a bit of fun along the way.

Peter Samsom, Chairman of the group, said: "There are many people in and around the North Pennines who have small areas of land but who don't have a traditional farming background, and by establishing the group we hope to bring together people with similar interests. Many of us have a lot to learn, be it about making hay or about keeping livestock, or about how to best manage our land to benefit wildlife, and most large-farm solutions do not work for us. By organising bespoke training, social events, networking, and learning from each other, we'll get better at what we do, and who knows, we might even make some new friends, be able to help out each other, and enjoy the experience."

The North Pennines Smallholders' Association has a close relationship with the North Pennines AONB Partnership, but has been set up as an independent group with its own committee and constitution. Dr Ruth Starr-Kedde, Nectarworks Project Officer with the AONB Partnership, said: "We realised a while back that a group bringing together smallholders from across the area would be beneficial, and we've supported the process of setting up the group. We can help the group with elements of training, especially with regard to wildlife conservation issues. For instance, we organised a couple of training workshops on managing rushes, not just to improve the grazing, but also to make sure the fields are good for breeding birds. However, the group is independent and will be able to put on events on a much wider range of topics."

Peter added: "We currently have members based in Hexhamshire, Allendale, Weardale and Alston, but also a little further afield. My holding is in the North Tyne area, but the issues we face are very similar. We want to make sure our smallholding is a haven for wildlife, in addition to producing hogget and wool from our Shetland sheep. The North Pennines Smallholders' Association don't have a hard boundary, and nor do we specify how much or how little land members can have."

Membership of the North Pennines Smallholders' Association is just £10 per holding, per year, and anyone interested can find more information, together with membership forms at www.northpenninessmallholders.co.uk. The group also has its own facebook page.



ANYTHING NEWSWORTHY TO REPORT?

If you or your association think that you have something which other people or organisations should be aware of, then email us at ruth@homefarmer.co.uk, or telephone us on **01772 633444**, with the details and let us blow your trumpet.



SOMERSET SMALLHOLDERS' ASSOCIATION

* INTRODUCTION TO SCYTHING AND HAYMAKING

Sunday 12th June at 10am

We are very lucky to have amongst our members, Andi Rickard from Somerset Scythe School, the current Ladies' Scythe Champion. Scything is a great, green and healthy way to manage a woodland, meadow, lawn, allotment and/or footpath. We will be running an Introduction to Scything and Haymaking course, where Andi will cover everything from handling, maintaining and choosing your own scythe equipment, to actual hands-on practical skills on how to mow grass and make hay in a fun and green way.

STAFFORDSHIRE SMALLHOLDERS' ASSOCIATION

* SURVIVAL SKILLS – NOT QUITE 'BEAR GRYLLS STYLE'

Saturday 16th April

* VISIT TO THE RED LION FARM AT HAUGHTON – HOME OF SOME VERY NICE ICE CREAM

Saturday 21st May

* VISIT TO A SMALLHOLDING TO SEE GLOUCESTER CATTLE AND WILD FLOWER MEADOWS

Saturday 25th June

CONTACT US

If your association or society has forthcoming events that are also open to non-members, please let us know by calling **01772 633444**, or by emailing ruth@homefarmer.co.uk, with the details.