



UPDATE



A reminder why we are doing this

FCN: Providing shelter from the storm

Members of the farming community are renowned for putting the needs of their farming businesses and livestock above themselves.

This was particularly evident at the start of 2018, when the adverse weather conditions that one would expect in winter continued right through into spring. With no concern for their own wellbeing, farmers were out in their tractors, clearing roads in their local communities and helping people who had been stranded in their vehicles.



Only now, the farming community is beginning to count the cost of the damage that the weather has caused. Hundreds of livestock have been killed and crop production has been badly affected. Many farmers now face the prospect of a poor harvest and a decline in income for this year.

If that wasn't enough to deal with, many have also been forced to deal with significant delays in farm support payments, a rise in animal disease and personal issues that we all face in our day-to-day lives.

While the weather conditions have improved, the wellbeing of many farmers has not. That is why support services like The Farming Community Network (FCN) are vital. Having the option of talking to somebody confidentially and without judgement is of great comfort to those within the farming community who are struggling to cope. Our helpline is open every day of the year from 7am to 11pm and our volunteers are ready to provide a sympathetic ear to those in need. But this would not be possible without your help.

It costs approximately £20 to keep the FCN helpline running for just one hour. The charity relies heavily on donations in order to continue its work and fundraising initiatives, such as the GAFT Bike Ride, are a fantastic way of supporting both FCN and the farming community. The money raised from this event will be vital in helping to keep the helpline running and ensure that the farming community has access to the support that they desperately need.

On behalf of everyone at FCN, thank you so much for your support with the GAFT Bike Ride!

Five simple ways you can help raise funds for FCN

1. Collection tins

An FCN collection tin on your store counter is a great way of raising much needed funds.

2. Promotional materials

It's not just about the money – it's about raising awareness too. We have lots of promotional materials available, such as posters, leaflets and helpline cards to help you promote your fundraising activity.

3. Show season

If you are exhibiting at a local show this summer, display our GAFT Bike Ride posters and talk to visitors and encourage them to support the event.

4. Speak to the local press

We can supply you with a template media release – simply personalise this to include details about your fundraising and send it by email to the local press.

5. Get social!

Using Facebook and Twitter is a great way to tell others about the GAFT bike ride. You can raise loads of awareness about FCN and encourage your friends to sponsor you.



The FCN head office is there to help you with your fundraising needs. Please speak to Fundraising & Supporter Relationship Manager, **Vicki Beers**, on **01788 510866** or email vicki@fcn.org.uk.





Full steam ahead

Holsworthy based **Harpers Feeds** are gearing up for the relay as Finance, Office and HR Manager Tina Collins explains.

"The charity relay is a great chance for us to show our support for the farming community and commitment to all the farmers in the region.

"It has also captured the imagination of people across the business and our team includes people from all sections of the company, including some who will admit they haven't ridden a bike for years.

"We will be promoting the relay on social media and in our newsletters, and are now turning our attention to fund raising which is, after all, what the relay is all about.

"We will be placing collecting buckets on all the receptions at the mill and our farm store. We are attending numerous shows over the summer and will have buckets on all our stands - we are sure all our visitors will pop a donation in.

"All our sales force and drivers will be taking sponsor forms around with them on all their visits too.

"In the lead up to the relay arriving here on 26th June, we will be approaching all the other businesses on the industrial estate, many of whom work in agriculture. We will also be working with Holsworthy Market to raise funds on market days.

"By having a number of activities we will hopefully be able to contribute a significant amount to the fund - and have some fun along the way."



Look out for us at the gafta dinner

The Cycle Relay will feature prominently at the **GAFTA Dinner** in London on 19th June when we will have the opportunity to raise funds and promote FCN. Our thanks to GAFTA for giving us this opportunity.

If you are coming to the dinner, why not have your photo taken with our penny farthing?

Getting the message out there

We are stepping up our efforts to promote the relay and FCN - and need your help

Twitter

We want to step up the activity on Twitter as this is a great way to achieve excellent profile across the industry. If you are on Twitter make sure to follow us (@GAFT2018) and encourage others in your business to do so. Please retweet our posts. When you make your own posts please include #feedtrade #bikeride.



Several participants have already promoted the ride on their websites and in their newsletters. Please take the opportunity to raise the profile of the relay in all your communications.

On the press front, **Feed Compounder, AgriTrade News, Farmers Guardian, British Dairying, Dairy Farmer, Arable Farming, Beef farmer** and **Sheep Breeder** have already carried pieces on the relay with other titles to follow. **Sheep Farmer** and **Feed Compounder** will be reporting on progress in their weekly newsletters. **Format Solutions** have also talked about their involvement in Feed Compounder - thanks to them for that.

We are now rolling out a regional press plan to support the relay as it moves through the country.

Anything you can do to promote the ride in local press will help us achieve our target.

Get ride ready

You've ridden the miles and done the training - now, as the Cycle Relay approaches, the last thing to do is make sure your bike is up to the challenge. **Halfords** is offering free bike checks, which will look at brakes, gears, wheels, tyres and chains, as well as offering expert advice on how to keep your bike in tip top condition for the coming months. There is no need to book, you can just turn up with your bike.



Sponsors help keep the costs down

Our aim is that as much of the money raised by the relay participating companies goes to support the work of FCN. So a big thank you to our generous sponsors, who by helping cover the costs of the relay are ensuring we meet our aim.

Running the support vehicle is a huge part of our costs. **Bristol Port Company** have kindly lent us a van and **De Lacy Executive** and **Biotal** are covering the other transport costs.

Anpario have sponsored the hi-viz vests which are an essential part of the safety of those involved while

Mole Valley have contributed to help cover other costs.

We are also indebted to those participating companies who have already covered accommodation costs.

The more sponsors we can attract, the more money goes to FCN.

Please contact **Richard Cooksley** if you want to help sponsor the costs of the relay on 01275 373539 or 07801 435772.

