

From Agriculture to Adventure Centre

Yates Farm has been host to Youth Camps going back some twenty years when the then owner Tom Roberts, allowed youth groups to use his fields and his own kitchen to hold annual camps.

Changing aspirations and expectations together with the increasing age of leaders meant that camps stopped in the late 1990s. In 2001 TRAC was formed as a charity specifically to take ownership of Yates Farm and develop it as a modern 21st century camping and adventure centre.

Planning permission was granted in June 2003 for change of use from a farm to the Centre with consent for the conversion of Barns and Buildings to provide kitchen/dining room and sleeping accommodation. Consent was also given for new buildings to provide sleeping accommodation (60 bed spaces); dining room and kitchen, together with a much-enlarged Sports Barn.

In December 2004 Tom died and the charity took possession of the whole Farm including the Farmhouse. Since then, a group of volunteers (mainly Trustees) have been at the Farm every Tuesday carrying out extensive works of devotion and renovation.

So far, we have completely gutted the Farmhouse in readiness for refurbishment and modernisation. The former Milking Parlour and Outhouse has been transformed beyond all recognition into a Dining Room for 50, with fully fitted kitchen. The Hayloft has been turned into a Utility Room on the Ground floor, and sleeping accommodation for 6 people upstairs. We have purchased two "Portacabin" buildings and transformed them into ladies and gents showers and toilets. The existing drainage system was found to be totally inadequate and we have, therefore, removed everything and installed new electrical, water and gas pipes throughout the farm. Finally, the large Cattle Barn has been transformed into a sports barn providing opportunities for indoor sports.

A huge amount still needs to be done as we are desperately short of indoor bunked sleeping accommodation. The present road access is also unsatisfactory and does not meet modern safety standards. We are therefore planning an ambitious new build and renovation programme to provide:

- * A new access road from the main road
- * Conversion of existing Barns to provide more indoor accommodation.
- * New sleeping accommodation for 70, with new dining room and kitchen.
- * An improved Sports Barn and eventually a new replacement.