



## Catesby Estates go back to University

This year Catesby Estates team attended a very interesting “Introduction to Agriculture” course at the Royal Agricultural University (RAU) in Cirencester.

This was a back-to-basics course designed to introduce non-farmers and people who have had very little experience to the agriculture sector.

The course included how modern agriculture in the UK works, types of farming, the farming seasons, how profits are made (or lost), and all the various countryside management schemes and ecology issues that affect farming today.

The theory element was combined with some practical site visits to both arable and dairy farms which are part of the Bathurst Estate which the RAU have a partnership with.

The farm visits provided a great way to see some of the innovation going into farming from cows wearing pedometers to help provide information about their health and well-being, to robotic feed pushers to reduce labour costs, waste and encouraging higher feed intake. As many of you will know, the Catesby business means we spend a lot of time dealing with farmers, landowners and rural land agents.

It is therefore important when we are visiting farms, walking sites and building relationships with landowners that we have a basic understanding of the agricultural sector and how farmers think and work.



Integrity



Partnerships



Innovation



Human



Social

When dealing with landowners it helps greatly if you are able to put yourself in their shoes and understand what they are thinking and wanting, including how any land deal affects them and their business.

Selling land is a big deal for most farmers. They generally don't like doing it (land can have been in their family for generations). You can only sell land once, so when they do, it has to be right for them.

Many farmers.... big or small.... rich or poor, think in a similar way.

Farming is not just business, it is a way of life, and if you can understand that way of life (the importance of the seasons, crop types, livestock types, farm machinery, wheat prices etc) it goes a long way in establishing a good relationship with the landowner where they trust and feel comfortable dealing with you.

We work closely with our landowners over what can be a considerable period of time, so building and maintaining relationships are key.

This course helped the Catesby team to understand the basics of agriculture today and some of the key issues our landowners may be facing when thinking about their land and their future.

We are planning on making this a regular feature of the Catesby team training calendar to ensure our knowledge base continues to grow.

