**2014 Peter Scott Award - Jan Davinson**

Jan Davinson is the first recipient of the Peter Scott Award for Outstanding Contribution to Charity. It is testament to her 17 years of dedication and achievement with the Cumbria Federation of Young Farmers Clubs – a rural organisation for 10 to 26 year-olds. Jan’s impactful and enduring work, unknown to the wider public, is exactly what the Peter Scott Award was set up to recognise. We are delighted to have found such an outstanding person for the 2014 inaugural award.

Jan went above and beyond the call of duty to help the county’s young people realise their potential, develop their skills and enjoy their lives. When she retired in 2014 as chief officer she had built the young farmers’ movement in Cumbria into one of the largest and most vibrant in the country with 1500 members across 26 clubs. She would be the first to say this success was due to the incredible energy and capabilities of the young people she supported and believed in.

Jan, who was involved with all the Cumbrian clubs and who didn’t have a farming background (not a membership pre-requisite) said her role was very fulfilling, full-on and varied.

"It was immensely rewarding to help young people reach their potential through signposting them to academic, training or work opportunities. It is also pleasing to see past members using skills gained in YFC to support their rural communities as councillors, PTA members and so on" said Jan.

“Not many youth groups cater for such a wide age-range, are run democratically and provide such great personal development opportunities. My line manager was a young person, and members ran meetings providing unique learning situations. Other life and work skills came from participating in and organising all the many competitions, events and activities that are a regular feature of Young Farmers – educating and entertaining thousands of young people, binding small communities together and giving them a voice. It’s been a privilege to be part of this success story” added Jan.

Jan has worked with young people throughout her career. After leaving Lancaster University with a sociology degree in 1973 she became the first detached youth worker for Carlisle City Council – a post created to respond to the city’s young punks. She then went to a research post, looking at community care at Durham University, followed by a teaching qualification from Leeds University. This led to further youth worker roles before she joined the Cumbria Federation of Young Farmers Clubs in 1997.

Others within the rural sector, like Nick Utting and James Eckley, have also commended her work at the Federation. They say she has helped develop many outstanding citizens and created a strong and successful youth movement in Cumbria.

Jan’s service to her community was recognised in the 2015 New Year’s Honours List when she received an MBE for services to farming and the rural community from Prince Charles at Buckingham Palace.

The Peter Scott Award comes with a £2,500 grant which Jan used to provide a residential development opportunity for Young Farmers at Brathay Hall.