

## Portnellan

Will: Hi and welcome to AHEAD OF THE FIELD, a podcast series brought to you by NFU Mutual, exploring how farmers are growing their businesses in the future. I'm Will Evans. I'm a farmer and podcaster based in North Wales. This series of podcasts will look at new sources of income, new farming models, new farming technology and our first few episodes will be focusing on farmers who've done something different, who've diversified their businesses and are looking at new ways to secure their farming futures. I myself moved from being a relatively small scale dairy farmer into beef production, arable crops, a free range egg unit contract bailing business and a little bit of podcasting on the side and what it's done is it's made our business more robust for the future. According to our research, over 60 percent of farm businesses have done some sort of similar diversification and so we're starting this series by setting out to meet some of the people who've done this, who've met the challenges and are inspiring other people with their successes. We'll hear their stories, we'll walk around their farms, hear what their biggest challenges have been, what they've had to overcome and hopefully get them to tell us some of their secrets and ask what they think the big opportunities are. We'll also talk to the experts who can give us all some insight and advice about what help is out there, if you're considering diversifying for your own farming business.

Today we're at Portnellan Organic Farm, on the beautiful south eastern shore of Loch Lomond. In 1952, Stanley Scott Park bought these 230 acres for his son Jock to manage as a beef and dairy farm. It stayed in the family ever since with Stanley's grandson David and now his great grandson Chris all working here. In 2005, they started offering mooring for rent on the loch and got a taste for diversification. They now boast four star self-catering accommodation, glamping, speedboat tours, kayaking and lots more, as well as remaining a family farm with an organic beef herd. Chris is the fourth generation of the farming family and he's going to show us around. Morning Chris.

Chris: Morning Will.

Will: So there's been a pretty dramatic change in direction on the farm over the last few years, how did it all come about?

Chris: I suppose it really came about, because of necessity really. We were looking to bring in an extra income so that we could support, what was at the time three generations of the family plus a dairyman. So the first thing they did back in 2005, we started offering moorings for rent on Loch Lomond and then in 2010 the price we were being paid for the milk was wasn't really worth producing milk anymore, so we no longer had a dairyman. We took the decision that we were going to convert the dairyman's cottage into four star self-catering. The next thing we did was we found out about glamping and we decided that we're going to give that a go. We put up a glamping tent and started offering that for rent as well. I suppose about the same time, I also started up a side business running speedboat tours on Loch Lomond and also offering kayak and paddleboard hire as well. Yeah and that's kind of where we've got to now.

Will: So have you have you expanded the land base at all over the...?

Chris: No, we've been working what with what we, what we had, we're a little bit confined in that we've got Forestry Commission land on one side, we've got Loch Lomond on the other side and not much to go on, on the other side, so we're working with what we have.

Will: Yeah okay. Had you talked about diversifying for a long time, in the family?

Chris: Yes I think we had. It was getting to the stage where we really needed to diversify into something else to bring in an additional income. And going back a few years we actually got planning permission for a fairly sizable development on the farm, self-catering accommodation, but at the time the costs were just too high and it was also going to be too

much of an impact, it was it was going too big, too soon really.

Will: And do you think, if you hadn't diversified that you would still be on the farm?

Chris: Probably not, no. The income from farming alone just isn't enough to support two generations. So no, the diversification has meant that I am able to stay on the farm.

Will: So are you okay to take us on a bit of a tour now then please?

Chris: Absolutely, let's go have a look around.

[Sound of walking]

Will: It's not until you get down here that you appreciate the scale of the loch, is it?

Chris: No it's quite a big loch. It's about twenty three miles long and about five miles wide, at its widest.

Will: Wow. And you can see, I mean I guess you can only see a small portion of it here?

Chris: Yeah, we're actually looking across to Inchmurrin Island there, so that's not even the other side of the loch.

Will: So these are all your moorings here, how many do you have?

Chris: We've got about 20 mooring down here.

Will: Is it all year round or just..?

Chris: No the moorings really run from the 1st of April through till the end of October, so this season really, just finished, yesterday, that's why there's barely any boats on, on them at the moment.

Will: Yeah. Had you had any experience with speed boats before you...?

Chris: Yes. I worked for another company actually doing a similar, similar sort of thing. I got some experience, got some qualifications. I also bought my own boat and then I guess when I finished university I decided that I could set up for myself and start running it from the farm.

Will: And was this, an easy win to start with because of the location you are in?

Chris: Yeah, it was a good way to make use of our location and in terms of investment, it was a reasonably quick return on capital.

Will: Does it take much upkeep at all?

Chris: There is a little bit of work involved, we do have to inspect them annually to make sure there is no wear and tear and we have to replace any chains as necessary. We also drop the chains to the bottom of the loch over the wintertime, just to prevent any unnecessary wear on the on the mooring chains.

Will: So how, how quickly did the whole business take off once you initially took the plunge?

Chris: Erm, it took off fairly quickly. To start with it was really just for personal use and we had our own boats here. Then we realized that there was actually quite a demand for moorings on Loch Lomond, it's a popular boating destination and there are limited mooring spaces on the

Loch.

Will: So this is a speedboat, looks awesome, can we have a go?

Chris: Absolutely yes. Let's go.

[Sound of the boat]

Will: We're out on the loch now, did you already spend lots of time down here as a kid?

Chris: Yeah. I've lived on the loch all my all my life and I spent a lot of my childhood playing around on boats and being out in the water. So yes.

Will: So who runs all the boat trips, do you did it yourself?

Chris: Yeah, so the boat trips is my, my part of the business, I set it up when I finished university. And again it was really just trying to make use of the location and also doing something that I enjoy doing. It's obviously, it's a great place to grow up and it's nice to be able to share that with other people as well.

Will: Yeah. So what sort of people do you take out in the loch, what tours and trips?

Chris: I do a variety of tours, anything from an hour's tour around the sort of south end of the loch up through the islands and things, through to island visits, speed boat tour and a meal as well, take people out for dinner and I even do a speedboat pub tour, which is very popular, sort of stag and hens and birthday parties and things like that.

Will: I bet it is. I wish we had more time for that. So how do you, how do you promote the trips?

Chris: Ah, it's mainly through the website but we also use social media like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, a little bit as well and also platforms like Visit Scotland and Love Loch Lomond.

Will: So what did your grandfather think of all this when you started it up?

Chris: Well he was a little bit skeptical about power boats, he was more of a sailing man really. But he was actually my first charter. He wanted to take a few of his friends out and show them around the loch and I think by the end of it he could definitely see the advantages of being able to step onto a boat and turn a key rather than put sails up.

Will: So it must've been quite a big jump initially, there must mean quite a bit of capital and investment?

Chris: Yes, there certainly was, obviously boats are not cheap, I had to buy a boat. I was lucky in that my parents were able to loan me a little bit of money to start up until I started bringing in an income. And since then it's really kind of paid for itself. So, I run my first boat for three and a half seasons and then I recently bought a new boat, just a couple of months ago. So yeah, it's starting to pay for itself now.

Will: And from a business point of view, was it quite a steep learning curve?

Chris: Yes, it was. I was learning to run my own business, which I hadn't done before, suddenly I was answering a lot of emails and inquiries and things like that. So, yeah, there's a lot to it, and keeping finances and things like that, records. So yeah, quite a lot to it.

Will: Is there any advice you would give for anyone in a similar situation now?

Chris: So yeah, I would advise people to make use of what they've got, do they have, for example, an old shed or a building that isn't doing anything? Do you have a small lake or even a loch on your doorstep that you can make use of? Also, you have to consider the wider area that you're in, are you in a particularly touristic area? Do you have walking or cycle path going past your front door or are you just off a main road that's going to bring people to you?

Will: I guess it may be looking at how many people around you are doing similar things as well and if you can set yourself apart and do something different like you've done, then there's a lot of value to that isn't there?

Chris: Definitely. Yeah. People are always looking for something a little bit different, a little bit special and yeah don't, don't be afraid of competition, but try to look for ways that you can maybe be a little bit different from them.

Will: So when you started the business was it, was it a lot of gut feeling involved, that you were onto a winner or was there a lot of very detailed planning and research that went into it?

Chris: I would say a little bit of both, it complemented what we'd already done on the farm in terms of providing accommodation for people, so it was providing something for them to do while they were staying. There was also a little bit of gut feeling as well, you know, it's just such a beautiful area, who wouldn't want to come out on a boat on a nice sunny day?

Will: And you've got the advantage that it's something that you love doing obviously?

Chris: Absolutely. Yeah, it's something I really do enjoy doing, so I've taken my passion for Loch Lomond and boating and turned it into a business.

Will: Just before we carry on with the rest of this episode, you might like to know that NFU Mutual has published a report on diversification that you can download right now. Just go online and search for NFU Mutual diversification. And if you're enjoying this podcast, please do make sure you subscribe, so that you never miss an episode. Right, back to the program.

We're joined here in Portnellan by Charlie Yorke one of NFU Mutual's experts on rural affairs. Is going into your holiday activities in clamping quite a popular form of diversification for farmers.

Charlie: Absolutely, it's one of the most popular forms diversification we've seen and particularly for farmers who might have sheds, buildings that aren't being used. It's a great way to utilize these and we're starting to see farmers considering to diversify are looking at this sort of venture. So this means it's really important to do plenty of planning, research, understand your community and area, make sure you're not oversaturating it, and the market is genuinely there for what you're trying to do.

Will: And in this case it's obviously been a good way of keeping the family farm going through tough times. It's a common theme in diversification.

Charlie: Most diversification enterprises are set up to provide another income stream to the farm. And it just helps ride out those poor years. But equally one of the other reasons is that they set up business opportunities for future generations to stay in the farm and have that importance in the business.

Will: What should farmers give the most thought to before diving into a venture like this?

Charlie: One of the biggest things for me would be to recommend you just plan and prepare well that means getting advice from those who've already diversified into activities like the guys here have. It's really important to think about the cost to set up the seasonality of the business. Research is vital to make sure you've got a market for your idea.

Will: What are the common problems or challenges that farmers encounter?

Charlie: The first for me is getting the planning commission. So get to know your local planning officer understand what you can and can't do. That can be vital in understanding what you what you could set up on the farm. Finding good staff to help run the business can be another problem particularly if you are in a very remote area like this. Securing finance can also be difficult. There are schemes, grants out there available to you but finding them and accessing them can sometimes be problematic.

Will: What are the big things to consider from an insurance perspective?

Charlie: For me, anybody looking to diversify and consider the implications of insurance that they need to speak to your insurer from the start, you know whether that's somebody from NFU Mutual, your local agent. Whoever it is, engage with them. They they've got ideas, they'll have access to people local to you as well that could just help shape your plan and your business idea a little bit more. Any enterprise also bringing public onto your premises does present a very different risk to your normal activities on a farm. However quirky, stylish your accommodation could be, and you've got to make sure you've got the right insurance in place for slips, trips, bumps, anything like that. It's ideal to speak to your agents or your insurance advisers to look for covers like business interruption. Make sure you get that protection in place to protect your revenue stream should the worst happen.

Will: What help or advice is available?

Charlie: The help and advice you need will depend on your own skill set but also that of your family members. Remember what they can and can't do in their expertise. However you are likely to need some expert advice like your planning, like your access to roads, recruiting, managing staff. All these things, and it's really important in those situations to seek the right people to give you that advice.

[Sounds of walking]

Will: So, Chris we've come back up to the farmyard from the loch, whereabouts are we now?

Chris: So we're up next to the old farmhouse, which is our four star self-catering accommodation. It used to be the dairyman's cottage, but back in 2010 when we stopped dairying, we no longer had a dairyman, the cottage stood empty for a couple of years and needed a lot of work done on it.

Will: Okay and we're joined by your father, David. David, you've grown up here, lived here all your life, are you pleased with all the changes it's been over the last few years?

David: Yes, absolutely. If there were any regrets, we should have just started a lot earlier than we actually did.

Will: Well that's interesting. Why, why do you say that?

David: Because we're seeing progress, which we hadn't been seeing before.

Will: Do you miss the cows, do you miss being a dairy farm?

David: I missed it briefly, but very briefly.

Will: [Laughing]. So how much research and planning did you both do before you diversified?

David: Well, I think if we start with the farmhouse, it was an asset we had which was deteriorating, we knew we had to do something with it. So yeah, we did a bit of research, a little bit of planning on that and then got stuck into it.

Will: Did you seek out any specific advice or support in those early days, either from professionals or fellow farmers who'd done similar things?

David: Yes, we were fortunate, I was at a meeting with the National Park and the NFU and through that I got involved in doing a whole farm business plan with the National Park and that was very beneficial to us and helped us quite a lot, pointed us in the right direction.

Will: And what were the steepest learning curves in the process? I guess from coming from being very sort conventional dairy farm, to now dealing with lots of people coming on the place and things like what, did what did you have to learn in those early days?

David: We certainly had to get used to dealing with the public, but, you know, it wasn't a big, it wasn't a big step that.

Will: Dealing with the public, what do you enjoy about it? Do you enjoy meeting people from all over the country, all over the world?

David: Yeah absolutely, definitely, I really enjoy that. And you know, 99 percent of the people are keen to find out what we're doing, how we're doing it, why we're doing it and it's good to have that chat. Yeah.

Will: Are they interested in the farm as well, do they ask about the cattle? Are they supportive of farming in general?

David: In general, yes. I mean some people are very interested in what you're doing and it's an opportunity they've not had to be on an active farm and actually chat to the farmer.

Chris: Being organic is, people are interested in that, it's not a draw in itself, it's probably more the fact that we're a working farm. People really enjoy seeing what happens on a farm. It's maybe just something they haven't seen before.

Will: Okay

David: Without a shadow of a doubt, is the location is our main selling point and everything else rides on the back of that.

Will: Yeah and I'm not surprised you've said that I was, I was prepared for a stunning location, but I was not prepared for how stunning it is. Do you ever get tired of it, you've lived here all your life do you ever?

David: No I got very, very standard view, point on that one when people ask that question, there's plenty of days when you just can't see it.

Will: [Laughing] Yeah I can imagine, it's very changeable here. So, what advice would you have now for other farmers, who are thinking about diversifying, like you were in in those early days, in the mid-2000s?

David: I would say, think it through, speak to as many people as you possibly can, plan it and

go for it.

Chris: Make sure you know what your market is, you know, there's no point, in opening up an equestrian center if there's perhaps one just next door, unless it's going to be completely different. You have to know where your customers are coming from.

Will: So it is a case of doing a lot of research and finding out what's around you. You must know your target market well by now?

Chris: Reasonably well. I mean, we've kind of gone for, probably the higher end of the market or that's what we're trying to do. We've got a special location here and we're trying to make, what we provide special as well.

Will: How did you go about initially, building the Portnellan brand? Did you get advice on that or did you just do it yourself?

Chris: We got an artist to help come up with a logo that we've used on our website and on social media I guess we've really, we've really built it ourselves just, just through the website and by using the likes of Facebook and Instagram and TripAdvisor and these things to help people find out about us.

David: The logo originally came from labels that we were putting on our organic beef when we were selling it at farmers markets, we had the logo and we stuck with it.

Will: And just going back to social media, it's, one of the beauties of that, is it's free marketing tool as well isn't it?

Chris: Yes it is. Yeah. You have to get your head round a little bit which, is easier for some of us [laughter]

David: Us older generation are probably not quite so smart on that one.

Chris: But, yeah it is a really useful tool. And yeah anyone doing any sort of diversification, I would certainly say get your, get your head round it and use it, because it is there, it is free.

Will: And were there any major panic moments or pitfalls where it could have all gone horribly wrong?

Chris: I can't think of any major ones. There's always going to be ups and downs along the way and you have good days and you have bad days. I think it's important to occasionally just step back and look at what you have achieved, because it's quite easy to get bogged down in it and just think what a difficult project this is or what a task it is ahead of you.

Will: So is there any advice you wish you'd had along the way?

Chris: Probably just get started earlier. All the things we've done have, have worked so far and it would've been good just to have made a start a few years prior to when we did, I think.

Will: What stopped you from starting earlier?

Chris: How far do you go back?

[Laughter]

Chris: Okay. When my grandfather was farming here it was very much just a farm and that's the way he liked it. He wasn't particularly interested in doing anything else, but he'd started

farming when that time, you could make a reasonable living out of just farming alone. So I think, to a certain extent he was a little bit set in his ways, so it perhaps took him releasing a little bit of control of the farm before things started to change.

Will: Yeah but then when you took him out in the speedboat for the first time he...

Chris: That certainly helped.

[Laughter]

Will: So how difficult was it to go out of dairy farming, because it's a big emotional attachment to, to the cows and the lifestyle isn't there?

David: Yeah you're right, you've been doing it for a lifetime and it's a big change. But, on the positive side, it freed up a lot of time which allowed us to put energy and time into diversification.

Will: So for other small scale dairy farms who might be listening out there, what would you say to them if they're looking at the way things are going now, dairy farms getting much bigger, scale seems to be everything, what would you say to people who perhaps thinking about diversification?

David: I would say think about it very seriously, take the bull by the horns and get on with it.

Chris: The other thing is that you don't necessarily have to get out of farming, you can quite comfortably run a small side business alongside, for example beef or sheep, which is slightly less intensive.

[Sound of footsteps]

Will: So we're in the farm yard, the sun's shining, we're overlooking the loch. Angela Smith is with us, she's the local NFU Mutual agent.

Hi Angela.

Angela: Hiya.

Will: Do you see a lot of farmers wanting to diversify in this area?

Angela: Yes, out of necessity, farmers are looking at bringing other sources of income into the business. We've seen self-catering certainly take off, B&B, cafés and also opening up the farm to tourists in to be able to actually pet the animals and interact more.

Will: And you know this farm well, why do you think they've been so successful here?

Angela: I think, as you'll have heard from Chris earlier on, it really is a love that he has for the boats and that certainly comes across. He's embraced social media and it's really important to interact with the public.

Will: What do you think other farmers can learn from their example?

Angela: It has to be social media. I think a lot of farmers are very scared to go on social media but the more that we can actually show the public about farming is actually about. I think it will benefit all.

Will: How can we get other farmers to get into social media, embrace and not be scared of it?



Angela: I think it's definitely an education point, erm farmers actually speaking to other farmers who have done it and learning from each other and not being afraid to just go on and give it a go.

Will: What advice and help have you been able to provide them with here over the years?

Angela: It's really about giving them advice on how to make sure that the insurance is still in place and accurate, as they continue to do different things and change the risks that they're still protected, and that ultimately if something does happen that we can ensure that their business can continue.

Will: Chris, which social media channels have you had the most success with?

Chris: I think probably Facebook and possibly TripAdvisor as well. Facebook is great for keeping people updated with the kind of day to day goings on in the farm, it's a great platform for being able to share pictures. TripAdvisor is good as well because it gives a little bit of an insight into how other customers, how their experience has been, whether they've enjoyed it and what they thought was good and so far the reviews on TripAdvisor have been really positive.

Will: Sure, and with social media, with the Facebook page, do you interact with people on that? Are they asking you questions? Are you answering questions and talking to them?

Chris: Yes they do. They do ask questions, they comment on photos and yes it's important to interact with people. It creates a sort of friendly atmosphere and makes you accessible to people.

Will: Yeah, it's building up goodwill as well isn't it?

Chris: Yeah it's building up a good customer relations.

Will: For people listening who may be wary of getting involved in social media, what would you say to them? What's the first thing they should do with it.

Chris: I would suggest just, you know, logging on and giving it a go. It's not actually as difficult as it seems. You just need to play around with it a bit you'll soon get used to it.

Angela: If they go on and see their neighbouring farmer and actually follow their review they can see how simple and easy it is and they enjoy it, they enjoy getting to see what your fellow farmers are up to.

Chris: I would also say that it's very important to have a good website, that's probably where we generate most of our, our business from. So make sure your website looks the part, it should be clear and easy to use, you know, you want people to be able to find you and you want people to be able to find the services you offer, easily. We actually got someone to do our website for us. It is something you can do yourselves, but if you want to make it look really smart and professional, I think that getting someone else in to do it is a good investment.

Will: So the mooring here are a quite a unique diversification, not everyone has access to something like that, but for people who are looking to do something a bit different, what help can you offer them?

Angela: As an adviser, it's really being close enough to the farm to know exactly what they're doing and how they're doing it and as long as we're understanding that, we can build a portfolio that works specifically for them, it's tailored to what they need.

[Sound of footsteps]

Will: We're back in the farmyard now, outside the former dairyman's cottage, fabulous views over the loch. Farmhouse to four star accommodation, did it just need a lick of paint or was it a really big job?

Chris: No it was a big job. By the time we got round to renovating it, it really needed to be stripped back to four walls and that's what we did. We took the roof off, we stripped it right back and we basically started from scratch. So it was a big job.

Will: So it must've been a great feeling when you first got the guests in?

Chris: It was fantastic, you know, you step back and you look at what you've achieved, over the two years it took us and yeah it was a great feeling.

Will: Yeah, there must have been a whole new business to get your head around, what challenges did it present?

Chris: I guess just having, having more people on the farm although that wasn't too difficult. It's just about sort of, you know, being nice to people and, and welcoming them, making sure that they receive a warm welcome when they arrive and meeting their expectations. But there is a lot of work that goes into just running a self-catering accommodation, you know, you've got the changeovers. Er, you have to decide whether you're going to do that yourself or whether you employ someone to do that. You've also got the booking side of things, we use a letting agent, which does take a lot of that side of things away from us, which is definitely a bonus, because that can be quite hard work.

Will: So why did you decide to go for, four star high end accommodation?

Chris: I think that we decided we're going to go for that, because we've got a special location here. We wanted to provide something special, as well as specialist experience. We didn't want to flood the place with, with too many people. People come for the peace and tranquility and for the views.

Will: And you also do glamping in here, where did you spot the gap in the market for that?

Chris: Well it was really that the National Park that first put the idea to us. Mum and dad had been at a meeting with the National Park and they asked "have you heard of glamping? Is it something that you would consider doing?" And I think they realized that, the Loch Lomond and The Trossachs area didn't have much glamping at that time. So yeah we, we, we hadn't heard much about it at the time, but we did a little bit of research and looked into it and we thought, yeah we'll give this a go.

Will: And does it work nicely alongside the boating? Do you sell them as packages?

Chris: It does work really well, people who come here, they want something to do well while they're staying on the farm. No, we don't usually sell them as a package. We're not going to force anyone to go out on the boat or take a kayak out, but they are there if they if they want to.

Will: Is your age helpful in doing all this? You know, you've got the energy of youth, entrepreneurial, does that help do you think?

Chris: it probably does. I mean I really enjoy the diversity of what we're doing here. It keeps the job interesting, you know, you've got the farming side but you've also got the, the accommodation and the boats and things and it's the diversity that makes it interesting.

Will: And from your point of view, as a young man coming into the family farm, has it given you a chance to really make your mark on the place, doing something different?

Chris: Yes I think it probably has. Especially with my business running the boat tours and kayak and paddle-boarding, because that is my business, I built it from nothing. And that's been a great thing to do, both in terms of just learning about running, a running a business.

Will: Do you have to abide by lots of regulations here? Is that something you weren't necessarily expecting?

Chris: I think we probably did expect some regulations, obviously we're in a National Park here, so we did have to apply to the National Park Authority for planning permission and for permission to trade for the boat trips as well. But it's something, if you are looking at diversifying, make sure you look into the regulations and seek, seek advice from the local authority.

Will: So we've come out into the field now, high up overlooking the loch, how many cattle are you still got here?

David: We've got about 110 head of cattle in total.

Will: When do you calf, in the spring?

David: Calf in the spring, yeah that's right.

Will: So you're trying to keep it a block, as tight as you can?

David: Yeah that works well for us. We used to have autumn calvers and spring calvers but it was really much better just to focus on one calving, one calving, one insemination. It's all artificial insemination we use. I prefer to be focused on one thing at a time.

Will: Okay and what bulls are you using?

David: We're using native bulls, we're using either in Aberdeen Angus or Beef Shorthorn.

Will: Okay and is that for management purposes for easy calving and things like that?

David: Erm, easy calving certainly important, yeah definitely and the other thing is the beasts that we do finish, I'm looking to finish them off grass. I haven't bought in any concentrate or cereals for the last, well since we stopped dairying.

Will: That's interesting. So you very much marketing it as grass fed, organic beef?

David: Yeah I mean, it's marketed as organic, you don't get a premium for grass fed and organic, you get either or and organic tends to be the better one.

Chris: Grass fed comes into it more when you're selling directly to the public, which we do too. People are becoming more aware about how their food is produced and the sustainability of it. We're looking to produce everything on the farm.

Will: Is it important for the tourists who come here, that this is still a working farm, are they very interested in what's going on here?

Chris: Yes I think it is an added point of interest. Most of the people who come and stay here they're really interested to find out what's going on in the farm. It's perhaps, you know, the first

opportunity they've had to get out and be close to cattle.

Will: Do the guests want to come out into the field and see the cows, do you have to sort of, stop them and they keep them in the yard?

Chris: We do ask them just to let us know if they would like to come out and meet the cows and we're always happy to take them up and show them round.

Will: So I guess you can't really underestimate the appeal of the location of this place, I mean you've grown up here, you're familiar with it but for the likes of us who've come here today, absolutely blown away by it, and that's going to be so appealing to people from all around the world isn't it?

David: Yes so the key thing is, to is to make use of it without spoiling what we've got, by introducing too many people to the place.

Chris: So we have been involved with a couple of farm tours over the, over the years. We were approached by Visit Britain a couple of years ago, basically they had a group of South Korean journalists and travel writers and they wanted to bring them across to the farm and show them round and take them out on the loch, as well. And that's something we might look to expand on is, is doing more in the way of farm tours.

Will: Hmm, and there's a growing markets for that kind of thing, but particularly in countries like China isn't there?

Chris: Yeah definitely, I think that people coming from abroad, they want to see what life is like in Scotland and we can we can show them what rural life is like.

Will: Chris and David, thank you so much for showing us around Portnellan today. Thank you for taking us out on the speed boat, I think that's been the highlight of the series.

Chris: You're very welcome. It's been a pleasure to meet you.

Will: And we do wish you the very best of luck for the future.

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