

Media Release

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Voluntary Initiative announces a new Chairman

Yorkshire farmer Paul Temple has been appointed as the new chairman of The Voluntary Initiative (VI).

Ruth Bailey, Chief Executive Officer of the Agricultural Engineers Association and Chair the Voluntary Initiative Community Interest Group representing the sponsoring organisations, announcing the appointment, said: "I am delighted to say that following a recruitment exercise involving an extremely high class field of candidates, Paul Temple has been selected to be the new VI Chairman.

"Paul's breadth of knowledge of the agriculture industry, including his time as Vice President of the National Farmers' Union, and his experience as an innovative farmer who is a willing adopter of new technologies, makes him an obvious choice to lead the VI at this challenging time for the agriculture industry.

"I would also like to thank the outgoing Chairman Richard Butler for his outstanding contribution to the work of the VI over the past six years. Richard has been instrumental in making the VI the industry champion for high-class environmental stewardship."

Paul Temple who farms near Driffield in East Yorkshire offered his thanks to all the sponsor organisations of the VI for the trust they have placed in him to take the organisation forward.

"I am honoured to have been chosen to lead the VI at this important time for British agriculture," he said.

"Although we do not yet know the Government's plans for our sector, I know that the pressure on all of us to continue to produce good wholesome food at a price that is fair to the producer and consumer alike will increase.

"To achieve this, we must always look to make the most agri-economic efficient use of our land. This brings challenges that will require the industry to adopt new and innovative practices that encourage greater use of integrated approaches and the continued responsible use of pesticides. We also need to demonstrate that the whole industry takes stewardship of our land seriously and, as importantly, we must do this in a way that is sympathetic to the wider environment."

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Notes for Editors

1. The Voluntary Initiative is a programme of industry-developed measures which promotes the responsible use of pesticides, within the context of Integrated Pest Management (IPM), in order to protect water and the wider environment and

ensure the availability of crop protection solutions in agriculture and horticulture in the future. The VI aims to be seen as the centre of excellence on pesticide stewardship and best practice by government, industry and stakeholders

2. The role of VI Chair is Government supported and funded by Defra.
3. Paul farms 312 hectares in partnership on the East Yorkshire Wolds, producing cereals for seed, oilseed rape, vegetables and beef. The farm has participated in the GM Field Scale Evaluation trials and is part of the Higher Level Stewardship scheme. Paul is a past NFU Vice President, former chairman of the COPA COGECA Cereals, Oilseeds & Protein Group and founder of the European Biotech Forum. He is also a past non-executive member of the National Non Food Crops Centre Board and currently chairs the AHDB Cereals & Oilseeds Sector Board.
4. The sponsors of The Voluntary Initiative are the Agricultural Engineers Association, Agricultural Industries Confederation, Country Land and Business Association, Crop Protection Association, National Association of Agricultural Contractors, the National Farmers' Union, NFU Scotland and the Ulster Farmers Union. Since 2001, over £86 million has been invested in the VI by the agricultural industry.

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