

Wedding Bells bring a Blessing for Borderlands....

The Thomas family at Sherrington have been great supporters of the work of the Borderlands 'Butty Van 2' that meets in and around the Leominster/Weobley area. It was a joy to hear that Andrew (son of David & Angela) and his fiancée Samira were getting married on the 28th June. A lovely ceremony was followed by a brilliant reception held in one of the barns – miraculously transformed into a palace – a banqueting hall complete with dance floor! The celebrations went on late into the night...

As we all know, making arrangements for a wedding involves a LOT of hard work, so you would imagine that just making sure everything went smoothly on the Big Day would be enough, but no! Whilst the decorations were in place and the barn was looking so good, the family decided to host a charity event the following day!

So, on the afternoon of Sunday 29th June, when Andrew & Samira should have been on honeymoon (!) and the rest of the family should have been relaxing after the Wedding, Sherrington hosted a fantastic afternoon organised by Dilwyn Young Farmers. The programme for the afternoon was full. The main event was a Charity Auction, but there were plenty of other activities to enjoy...



(Barn at Sherrington – transformed for the weekend!)

Everyone shared picnic food while drinks were served at the bar. Young Farmers circulated with raffle tickets and there was also an Envelope Draw – you were invited to put a cash gift in an envelope and write your name on it; the envelopes were collected with the promise that the winning envelope would receive x10 the amount in the envelope (if you gave £5, you would win £50!). All the rest of the money raised in the envelopes to be given directly to St Michael's Hospice, Hereford in memory of local friends who are no longer with us.

We were also privileged to hear from **three** speakers: Firstly, our Borderlands Chaplain, Dai Gwatkin, shared news and information about the work of the Chaplaincy, illustrating how the work we do is



(Dai chats with Olly 'Blogs')

both 'public' through the 'Butty Vans', but also 'private' through our confidential care and support carried out in the farm kitchen or in a pick-up truck. Then we had two guest speakers, Olly 'Blogs' Harrison & Martin Williams. Olly & Martin are doing great work on behalf of the farming family here in Hereford (Martin) and around the country (Olly). Their work has been influential in helping raise significant amounts of money and, almost more importantly, getting

people who are feeling overstretched and stressed to talk more freely to others in order to help release some of the worry and isolation felt by so many in the industry. (check out Olly on: '#ollyblogs')

After the raffle and the Envelope Draw, we concluded with the Auction. This was skilfully conducted by Gareth Wall from Sunderlands. There were almost fifty lots – all of which were generous and desirable – including items of clothing, tools, vehicle servicing, several lots offering a day's labour with a tractor, luxurious weekend retreats, a helicopter flight and even... ear-wax removal!! Gareth kept the lots moving quickly and the bids were incredibly generous.

All the funds raised at this Charity event are to be split three ways to support the work of: Borderlands Rural Chaplaincy, St Michael's Hospice & Dilwyn Young Farmers. All the arrangements went smoothly, the atmosphere was happy and relaxed, and the fundraising incredible! The Young Farmers are to be commended for their hard work in organising the event and again, it could not have happened without the support of the Thomas family, to whom we say a BIG, **'Thank You.'**



(Gareth Wall kept best of order at the Auction!)

As we write, the final total is still going up as more donations come in, but currently I can confidently say that more than **£10k** has been raised!! Whatever the final tally, the share that comes to Borderlands will continue to support the work done by our Chaplains, Volunteers and the Butty Vans. Wedding Bells have really brought a Blessing to Borderlands...!