

New partnership

A new partnership between the award-winning, English sparkling wine Candover Brook and the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust (HIWWT) was cemented at a 'Candover Brook & Canapés' evening in the vineyard celebrating the area's famous chalk streams and the little-known, endangered resident: the white-clawed crayfish.

This joint event was attended by local landowners, HIWWT trustees, donors and those passionate about Hampshire's rivers and chalk streams. Mark and Julian Sainsbury, founders of Candover Brook, Debbie Tann, Chief Executive and Dr Ben Rushbrook from HIWWT were also in attendance.

With only around 200 chalk streams left in the world and most situated in southern England, their preservation and the protection of the crayfish is a key concern. Both stream and crayfish are recognized in the design of Candover Brook's wine label.

The white-clawed crayfish is the UK's only native species of crayfish, but due to a dramatic decline, it is now an internationally endangered species. It is believed that up to 95% of the UK population has been lost. The Trust has implemented a white-clawed



Julian and Mark Sainsbury

crayfish project which involves creating innovative arcs, in river headwaters, lakes and ponds, which are able to support healthy, self-sustaining populations of crayfish.

Mark Sainsbury said: "For us, this is an exciting and important partnership as we care deeply about our place in this beautiful landscape. Our wine is named after the chalk stream running through the valley so the wonderful work HIWWT are doing to preserve this precious habitat and protect our emblem, the white-clawed crayfish, is

incredibly important to us. We're delighted to be playing our part in supporting them in their conservation efforts". Candover Brook has pledged 50p for every bottle sold via the website or within a 15-mile radius of the vineyard to support the project set up by HIWWT.

The vineyard was planted by the late Lord John Sainsbury and his sons, Mark and Julian, on a gentle south-facing slope in the Candover Valley in 2012 and the first wines were released only last year.

Ten-minute test is simple to use

Global Access Diagnostics (GADx), a social enterprise and leading developer of lateral flow and rapid diagnostic technologies, today announced it has expanded the applications of its low-cost, rapid diagnostic test, BotrytisAlert. Harnessing GADx's expertise in lateral flow technology, the test has shown to detect and measure the fungal crop pathogen Botrytis across several critical points in wine production; in the vineyard, in grape must and in finished wine. Early intervention in the disease cycle facilitates improved efficacy of sustainable control measures and to reduce unnecessary use of fungicides.

Launched in 2020, BotrytisAlert is a rapid antigen test originally developed for the soft fruit industry to monitor Botrytis spores, or bunch rot, in air samples to drive early warning of disease potential on exposed crops. In soft fruit, the test has been used to forecast infection risk, guide the timed application of control treatments ahead of symptom development, inform quality and drive crop post-harvest management decisions. BotrytisAlert has since been evaluated by both the North and Southern hemisphere wine industries and demonstrated to be simple-to-use, fast, and accurate for quantifying the Botrytis fungus in grape must and finished wine, in addition to directly on the vine. Effective for use prior

to transport and also at the wine pressing centre, the test is read at 10 minutes either visually or using a simple, low cost, small portable reader which can fit in the palm of the hand.

Globally, in the wine sector it is estimated, on average, 25% of turnover is lost due to Botrytis rot, at a cost to the industry of €15 billion per year. Botrytis is considered one of the most serious diseases of grapevine affecting not only yield, but grape quality and taste. In the UK's horticulture sector, the fungus infection is the second greatest cause of crop loss by reducing harvest yields and marketability, estimated to cost £54 million. Primarily affecting strawberries (£15-30 million losses) but also cut flowers (£24 million), tomatoes, onions, hardy nursery stock and ornamentals.

