

2nd National Care Farm Conference

“From Strength to Strength”

at

Harper Adams University College

27th March 2007



Conference Proceedings

Executive Summary:

The successful first National Care Farm Conference in November 2005 led to the formation of the National Care Farming Initiative (UK), (NCFI (UK)) by partners from the Arthur Rank Centre, the Bulmer Foundation, the Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens and Harper Adams University College. A steering group of representatives has subsequently been very active in promoting care farming to a wide audience of farmers, health and social care providers as well as trying to influence public policy.

A National Care Farming Network with a database of over 300 people was set up, to allow people to exchange both ideas and good practice and to provide an information hub. Network days at member care farms and an E newsletter were launched to further increase the exchange of knowledge. To formalise and structure their work the steering group drew up a set of aims and objectives for NCFI (UK), and one of the key aims was the requirement to provide evidence of the benefits associated with care farming. In this respect the University of Essex were invited to become an additional partner and Rachel Hine, Senior Research Officer on Jules Pretty's team joined the steering group.

The steering group were keen to build on the growing interest in care farming both in the UK and abroad and decided to arrange a further conference to bring together the network of practitioners, policy makers, social and health care professionals and academics, as well as those wishing to know more either from a care farming interest or from a need to procure such a service. Scottish & Newcastle plc the parent company of the Bulmer Foundation together with the Countryside Agency (now Natural England) agreed to sponsor a further conference, at Harper Adams University College and a date was fixed for 27 March 2007.

Getting care farming on the UK government agenda, as it is in other European countries, was seen as a priority. Keynote speakers were invited to demonstrate how the National Care Farm Initiative (UK) is working towards the aim of building a network of committed people and organisations that can lobby the government, in order to demonstrate how such an initiative as care farming can provide care and social welfare to those who have varying needs in our society. Dr Stuart Burgess, Chairman of the Commission for Rural Communities and the government's appointed Rural Advocate was invited to give his view on the government's perspective of care farming. David Chantler, Chief Probation Officer of West Mercia who attended the first conference agreed to speak on the recent collaboration of probation services and care farming. Rachel Hine, Senior Research Officer at the University of Essex and a member of the NCFI (UK) steering group would explain the background research that has taken place at the University on 'Green Exercise' and 'Green Care', and give her initial research findings on care farming in the UK. Professor Wynne Jones, Principal at Harper Adams University College provided his views on the agricultural perspective and the often difficult decisions that face the farming community. Dr Michael Dixon, Chairman of the NHS Alliance and an avid supporter of the work of NCFI (UK) agreed to discuss the developments in relationships between healthcare and agriculture, but was called away to a government meeting at the last minute, so Dr Kim Jobst kindly stood in.

It was also decided to ask practitioners to speak that had developed care farming businesses from their own farming roots, and demonstrated the aim of the NCFI (UK) to support farmers and rural businesses who want to diversify and be involved in a sector of care that is growing in credibility.

The practitioners who were present represented privately run organisations and were Tim James-Moore of Houghton Court Farm in Herefordshire, Edward and Anna Dugdale of Tickwood Farm in Shropshire and Dr Matthew Home of Willowdene Farm which is near Bridgnorth in Shropshire. A large area was also given over for exhibitors who set up stands for delegates to obtain information and advice during the network lunch, and represented public bodies, practitioners, voluntary and charitable organisations.

The focus of the conference was on how care farming in the UK is growing, with the theme going '**from strength to strength**'. Attendance by some 153 delegates from the health service, the probation sector, local authorities, public sector bodies, farming, charitable and voluntary organisations along with practitioners who are already providing on-farm health, education and welfare services and 'would be' practitioners certainly proved this.

The opening address was given by Gordon Gatward, Director of the Arthur Rank Centre and Chair of the NCFI (UK) steering group. He outlined the way the work of the steering group and the National Care Farm Network had developed over the 16 months and the inroads that had been made into obtaining funding, sponsorship, government recognition, and an increase in public awareness. He especially alerted the delegates to recent growing interest in the media.

Dr Stuart Burgess as first keynote speaker explained his role as Rural Advocate and the work of the Commission of Rural Communities which acts on behalf of the 9.5 million rural population and the rural businesses that make up a third of all businesses in England. He is active in bringing to the attention of the Prime Minister the plight of farmers caught in a poverty trap but also has described how the younger farmers are trying to embrace a new vision and purpose. He has brought care farming to the attention of the government and will continue to do so. As a member of the BMA Patient Liaison Group he is aware of prevalence of anxiety, depression and suicide in rural areas and that care farming is an opportunity for farmers to diversify. The 'Growing Well' Project at Low Sizergh Farm in Cumbria was given as a very good example of a project assisting people with mental health problems to return to work.

A comprehensive outline of the detailed research that has been carried out at the University of Essex on 'Green Exercise' and 'Green Care' was given by the second keynote speaker Rachel Hine. Practical studies that demonstrated that exercise taken in pleasant rural settings had a greater effect than exercise alone on blood pressure, mental health and well being were explained to the delegates. Sustainability and the multifunctionality of agriculture and the links to activities that come under the umbrella of 'Green Care' were further identified. Rachel explained that she was presently undertaking Stage I of the Research Study for the NCFI (UK) and her interim findings were based on 43 care farms with more questionnaires and interviews due shortly. Already it was evident that funding and financial issues were a challenge, and there was need for farmers to provide a scientific evidence base of the health care benefits and to be able to evaluate what has been achieved.

Professor Wynne Jones, the third speaker, stated that due to ever changing public policy there is more likely to a more market driven agriculture with a wealth of knowledge needed to consider whether your 'farm business' will be commercial! There is wide range of new business opportunities that make up the future agricultural portfolio and farmers as an experienced group of entrepreneurs may be well placed to take up new initiatives. Through the introduction of Single Farm Payment the farmers are adopting the role of environmental advocate and it may be natural for them to harness this to further public benefit in the form of care farming.

As the probation advisor to the recent TV series 'Growing out of Trouble' with Monty Don, the fourth keynote speaker David Chantler stressed the lessons learnt, the benefits and the achievements of using therapeutic techniques in a community setting with certain offenders. Importance of projects such as the one in the TV series and others, in stopping drug addicts from re-offending, he stated saves costs to society and insurance companies, but it is how to convince the government to invest these costs at the beginning of the process that is necessary. David commented the money is spent either way but in the UK we often spend it on financing failure rather than investing for success. The morning session was brought to a close by Dr Alastair King, General Manager of Bulmers who reflected on the passion of practitioners involved in care farming and the role that the Bulmers Foundation wished to play in supporting the NCFI (UK) and building up awareness of a holistic approach to responsible drinking. Bulmers had been engaging with government officials and spreading the news about the benefits of care farming.

Plenty of opportunity was given over the buffet lunch for delegates to network and talk to exhibitors on the stands.

The afternoon session started off with Dr Kim Jobst standing in for Dr Michael Dixon who he explained had been asked to contribute to the 'Health and Innovation Framework' and would take the opportunity to discuss care farming on behalf of the NCFI (UK). Kim stressed that the medical arena had moved fast in some areas, in that GP's could prescribe care farms as a therapeutic measure if they were in charge of their own budgets. What would really move the process on is gaining evidence that it works so that it could be taken to the practice based commissioners. He welcomed the practitioners and identified them as practical examples of people who are working towards changing how the farming community and therapeutic farming community can bring money back into the rural areas.

The first practitioner Tim James-Moore led the Houghton Project from his family farm and explained how his background working in City farms helped him set up the project that helps a mix of individuals with a range of health and social needs work together to promote social integration and health benefits. He advised new care farmers to focus on good motivated staff, funding sources, good publicity aimed at statutory bodies that speaks their language, and a passion to see people grow and develop. For Anna and Edward Dugdale the aim of their care farm is to create a haven for children with learning difficulties. They highlighted the positive partnerships they have formed with statutory bodies and local organisations and schools, but also the frustrations of overcoming insurance, health and safety, funding and local community objections. The mission statement of Willowdene Farm "to stimulate, promote and encourage a purposeful drug free lifestyle in a working society" was very much now a reality for Dr Matthew Home on his family farm. His parents had started the project and had successfully engaged with the Gestalt therapeutic programme with drug users and Matthew had gone on to improve funding through training grants and becoming an Approved Training Centre. Additionally, he explained that they had now set up further farming activities with livestock, and an agro-forestry link in South America. They employed their own Resettlement Officer and this resulted in some 90% of previous drug users finding work and 92% being drug free following resettlement.

At the end of the afternoon session, delegates had opportunity to ask the panel of keynote speakers and practitioners' questions, which covered issues of local community objections, social accounting and getting local health and social service procurers interested in care farming. Analysis of the feedback forms completed by conference delegates provided constructive messages of further issues and areas that could be explored and overall commented that the event was positive and inspirational.

Closing addresses were given by Richard Heathcote of Bulmers and Gordon Gatward. Both expressed their thanks to the organisers, sponsors and support staff for such a successful day and to the delegates for their active participation. Gordon asked delegates to reflect on what they had heard and seen that day, and in particular the main issues that had been voiced e.g. difficulties in obtaining funding, establishing an evidence base and how social accounting could be used to measure success, and finally how care farming can bring about health care benefits to an individual and help them realise the potential they have to develop.

The steering group would draw up action points from the issues raised during the day and work further to get care farming prescribed as a form of treatment by GPs, as well as lobbying central government and creating further links with the European Farming for Health Community of Practice Group. The vision of many of the delegates would hopefully be able to be progressed over the next 12 months.

<u>Contents:</u>	<u>Page:</u>
1. Background	7
2. Aims of the 2nd Conference	8
3. Conference Agenda	10
4. NCFI (UK) Chairman's Address – Rev'd Gordon Gatward	11
5. Keynote Speakers	
5.1 Dr Stuart Burgess	13
5.2 Rachel Hine	15
5.3 Professor Wynne Jones	25
5.4 David Chantler	28
5.5 Alistair King	32
6. Afternoon Address – Dr Kim Jobst	34
7. Practitioners	
7.1 Tim James-Moore	36
7.2 Edward & Anna Dugdale	37
7.3 Dr Matthew Home	40
8. Delegate Questions and Feedback	
8.1 Delegate Questions	44
8.2 Feedback	46
9. Closing Address & Conclusion	50
<u>Appendices:</u>	
1. NCFI (UK) Aims and Objectives	52
2. Speaker Biographies	54
3. Practitioner Biographies	57
4. Delegate List	60
5. Exhibitor List	63

“From Strength to Strength”

1. BACKGROUND

Following the success of the first National Care Farm Conference in November 2005 at Harper Adams University College, the steering committee led by Gordon Gatward, Director of the Arthur Rank Centre and consisting of Dr Kim A. Jobst, Healthcare Adviser to the Bulmer Foundation, Debbie Wilcox, Manager of the CaRE Network at Harper Adams University College and Ian Egginton-Metters, Assistant Director of the Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens formed The National Care Farm Initiative (NCFI (UK)).

Over the 16 months since the first conference the steering group have promoted care farming to a wide audience of farmers, healthcare and social care providers as well as actively trying to influence public policy on the need for such an initiative in the UK. Due to the amount of interest shown a National Care Farm Network with a data base of 300+ members has been set up. To keep members up to date and to seek out their ideas an E newsletter was started during 2006 together with the launch of network days to bring people in contact for further discussion.

Evidence of the benefits of care farming was seen to be a necessary objective of the group and as this type of research was already being carried out by a team at the University of Essex, it led to the invitation to Rachel Hine, Senior Research Officer to join the steering committee.

In order to structure the way forward for NCFI (UK) a set of aims and objectives was drawn up for 2006 – 2008 and a summary is given below with a detailed breakdown of the objectives in Appendix 1

NCFI (UK) Aims: -

1. To promote care farming amongst:
 - Farmers
 - Healthcare providers
 - Social services and care providers
2. To provide opportunities for practitioners to meet
3. To inform the network, practitioners and providers of new developments and to share good practice
4. To collect and present evidence of the benefits of care farming:
 - Physical Health
 - Mental Health and well-being
 - Social
 - Economic
5. To influence policy:
 - Agricultural
 - Health
 - Social care

In line with the aims and objectives a further conference was arranged to bring together the growing network of practitioners, policy makers, social and health care professionals, and academics that had formed since the first conference as well as introducing the concept of care farming to possible new practitioners and procurement bodies.

Scottish & Newcastle Plc the parent company of the Bulmer Foundation agreed to sponsor a further conference, together with the Countryside Agency (now Natural England) at Harper Adams University College and a date was fixed for March 2007.

2. OUTLINE OF THE 2ND NCFI (UK) CONFERENCE

The second conference took place on the 27th March 2007 and brought together 153 delegates from the health service, the probation sector, local authorities, public sector bodies, farming, charitable and voluntary organisations along with practitioners who are already providing on-farm health, education and welfare services and 'would be' practitioners. The focus was on how care farming in the UK is growing and is going 'from strength to strength'.

Keynote speakers were invited to demonstrate how the National Care Farm Initiative (UK) is working towards the aim of building a network of committed people and organisations that can lobby the government, in order to demonstrate how such an initiative as care farming in rural communities can provide care and social welfare to those who have varying needs in our society.

The keynote speakers, whose biographies are in Appendix 2, were: -

Dr Stuart Burgess, Chairman of the Commission for Rural Communities - was invited to give his view on the government's perspective of care farming as he is also the government's appointed Rural Advocate.

Rachel Hine, Senior Research Officer, University of Essex - was invited to inform the conference on the background research that has taken place at the University on 'green care' and 'green exercise', and to give her initial research findings on care farming in the UK.

Professor Wynne Jones, Principal, Harper Adams University College – was invited to give his views on the agricultural perspective.

David Chantler, Chief Probation Officer, West Mercia – was invited to speak on the recent collaboration of probation services and care farming.

The three practitioners invited came from privately run organisations and demonstrated the aim of the NCFI (UK) to support farmers and rural businesses who want to diversify and be involved in a sector of care that is growing in credibility.

Practitioners, whose biographies are in Appendix 3, were: -

Tim James-Moore, Houghton Court Farm, Bodenham, Herefordshire
Edward and Anna Dugdale, Tickwood Farm, Shropshire
Dr Matthew Home, Willowdene Farm, Nr Bridgnorth, Shropshire

Exhibitors were invited to set up stands for delegates to obtain information and advice during the network lunch, and represented public bodies, practitioners, voluntary and charitable organisations. A full list can be found in Appendix 5.

The aims of the second conference were to communicate the progress of the NCFI (UK) and National Care Farm Network to date, especially in terms of research findings, lobbying and recent funding obtained from the Countryside Agency. It also sought to look for guidance from the practitioners attending as to what they required from a network, and how it can work as a promotional tool for potential procurement organisations of their services. Additionally, the morning and afternoon chairmen

wished to emphasise the unique selling point of care farming and how the network could work to bring parties together as there was no other agency available in the UK to do so.

The day was highly successful, a copy of the agenda, a review of the keynote speeches, practitioners and workshop outcomes follow, together with our conclusions and action points for future direction.

3. CONFERENCE AGENDA

- 9.00 – 9.45 **Registration & Coffee**
- 9.45 WELCOME
Stephen Parsons B.Sc., M.Phil, Head of Rural Business School,
Harper Adams University College and NCFI (UK) Steering Group
member
- 9.50 MORNING CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION
Rev'd. Dr. Gordon Gatward OBE Director of the Arthur Rank Centre
& Chair of the NCFI (UK) Steering Group
- 10.00 THE GOVERNMENT'S RURAL ADVOCATE'S
PERSPECTIVE ON CARE FARMING
**Dr Stuart Burgess, Chairman, the Commission for Rural
Communities**
- 10.10 RESULTS OF INITIAL RESEARCH FINDINGS; who is
care farming in the UK? How many farms? Why & how?
Rachel Hine, Senior Research Officer, University of Essex
- 11.00 **COFFEE BREAK & NETWORKING**
- 11.30 CARE: THE AGRICULTURAL PERSPECTIVE
**Professor Wynne Jones, Principal, Harper Adams University
College**
- 12.00 CARE FARMING ON PROBATION
David Chantler, Chief Probation Officer, West Mercia
- 12.30 MORNING CLOSE
Dr Alastair King, Scottish & Newcastle
- 12.45 **LUNCH AND OPPORTUNITY TO MEET
PRACTITIONERS AND VIEW INFORMATION STALLS**
- 2.15 AFTERNOON CHAIRMAN'S ADDRESS; Developments in
relationships between healthcare and agriculture in 2006
**Dr Michael Dixon OBE, Chairman, the NHS Alliance (delivered by
Dr Kim Jobst, Bulmer Foundation & Steering Group Member)**
- 2.30 PRACTITIONER PRESENTATIONS
**Tim James-Moore, Houghton Court Farm
Edward & Anna Dugdale, Tickwood Farm
Dr Matthew Home, Willowdene Farm**
- 3.15 QUESTIONS TO THE PANEL OF SPEAKERS
- 3.45 **Richard Heathcote, Scottish & Newcastle Plc**
- 3.50 CHAIRMAN'S CLOSING ADDRESS
Rev'd. Dr. Gordon Gatward OBE Director of the Arthur Rank Centre
& Chair of the NCFI (UK) Steering Group
- 4.00 **Close and afternoon tea**

4. CHAIRMAN'S ADDRESS

Reverend Gordon Gatward – Director, Arthur Rank Centre & Chair of NCFI (UK) Steering Group

Thank you to Steve Parsons for the welcome to Harper Adams University College which is kindly hosting the second National Care Farm Conference. It is 18 months since the first conference was held here and there are certainly many more of you, due in part to the lack of snow we had on that occasion!

Firstly, I would like to share with you, where we have got both with the National Care Farming Initiative and with the National Care Farming Network. The Initiative is what came out of the conference and the network followed to represent a growing group of members. There are five partners in the Initiative and I represent the Arthur Rank Centre which is the Rural Churches National Responses Unit and also plays a major part in the charity work of the Royal Agricultural Society. The other four partners are Harper Adams University College, the University of Essex, The Bulmer Foundation and the Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens.

As a group we have built on the success of the first conference and one of the first things that happened was a funding bid to the Countryside Agency (now Natural England), so that we may take the work forward. The first part of that bid was successful and we established a research project. Although, there is a lot of work going on in respect of care farming very little is known about the extent of it and what the effects are. We were determined to address that and Rachel Hine will tell you more about this aspect later this morning.

Another funding bid was put in which has also been successful and that will be used for a Policy Officer as one of our main concerns is to get care farming on to the Government's agenda and for them to recognise that this an effective and cost efficient way to provide care for people in a wide range of circumstances. We hope to appoint a Policy Officer over the next few weeks or months to push this forward.

I would like, therefore, to mention our gratitude to Natural England for their support through the funding bids but also to Scottish and Newcastle and Bulmers who have been behind a lot of our work and are indeed sponsors for this conference. They will also be sponsors of an event that is to happen in a few weeks time, in May, when Baroness Byford, Shadow Minister in the House of Lords for Food and Rural Affairs, has invited us to a reception in the Lords to actually engage with policy makers and share with them what care farming is about. There will be six practitioners going, of which three spoke at our previous conference, and three from this conference. The idea is that we will try and persuade them how effective care farming is as a delivery of care in the UK.

At our last conference the National Care Farming Network did not exist and it now has somewhere around 300 members, which is some growth over that time. Hopefully, there will be even more following on from today's conference and you will have an opportunity if you are not a member of the network to actually include your name on the list. We have also started a newsletter which goes out regularly to the network members and launched network days, with a view that both of these will bring members/practitioners together so that people can exchange ideas, issues and concerns. Other people who want to get involved in care farming can also go along and find out what it is about.

Another development since our last conference is that there has been a growing interest from the media in 'what care farming is about'. This has been particularly illustrated in the last week with two major articles on care farming: -

- Sunday Telegraph (17/03/07) had an article about Highfield Happy Hens that featured at our previous conference, when Roger Hosking delivered a very good paper on his farm of 20,000 hens and how this helps young offenders.
- Community Care Magazine (22/03/07) had article about Noelle Wilson and the work she is doing at Top Barn Farm, and which was one of the first venues for the network days that we ran. It was a very effective day for those that attended. The article ended by making reference to this conference which helped raise attendance numbers from 80 to about 160 delegates, and so shows the effectiveness of media awareness.

We are looking forward to a day as exciting and as far reaching as we had last time, and we hope you will find it worthwhile and interesting.

Papers from this conference will appear on our website www.ncfi.org.uk and on the websites of our five partners: -

www.arthurrankcentre.org.uk

www.bulmerfoundation.org.uk

www.harper-adams.ac.uk

www.farmgarden.org.uk

www.essex.ac.uk



NCFI (UK) Steering Group

5. KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

A full set of keynote biographies can be found in Appendix 2.

5.1 Dr Stuart Burgess - Chairman, the Commission for Rural Communities

The Government's Rural Advocate's Perspective on Care Farming.



In my role as Chair for the Commission for Rural Communities I would like to tell you a little about the organisation. It was set up on 1st October 2006 as a statutory independent body, as it had previously been part of the Countryside Agency, and has three particular strands: -

1. Rural Advocacy – which I personally interpret as going around and listening to local communities. I have travelled a great deal over the last year so we can capture the messages and take them back to the heart of government. We act as the voice for rural communities and businesses, to ensure that their needs and views are heard and better understood.
2. Expert Adviser – providing hard evidence and informed advice to government. There is much anecdotal evidence but what we need to do is to turn this type of evidence into hard facts, as this is what government actually wants. For example, the work we have done around affordable rural housing. Last year I chaired eight regional conferences about that issue in village halls throughout the country. Also I have chaired four Post Office focus groups as these are high on people's agenda in rural areas. We have also been engaged in a participation enquiry as to how people can run their affairs much more locally which is often referred to as subsidiarity.
3. Independent Watchdog – where we look at government acts and bills at the preparation stage, a type of rural proofing, to make sure that the government listens very carefully to what is being said and done in rural areas. There is a particular focus on disadvantage and on areas suffering from economic under-performance.

The Commission acts as a help to the 9.5million people who live in rural areas who make up 20% of England's population along with the rural businesses which make up a third of all England's businesses and which contribute 30% to the country's economy.

In my role as Rural Advocate a post I took up in September 2004, I give a report to the Prime Minister which is of short duration so I ensure the points I make are punchy and

of priority to catch his attention. Last November at our last meeting one of the priority points made was around farming, as due to the changes going on many farmers are caught in a poverty trap. For example, we aware that hill farmers and diary farmers are going through an enormous amount of stress at this time. In Cumbria there are especially desperate cases amongst the hill farmers that I have visited. One in particular was driven to mental illness through hill farming. There are tragic stories to be listened to and to be told. In this time of great change in the farming community it is important that we make sure that the most vulnerable and affected are supported and listened to.

On the other side of the coin are the younger farmers who have a good deal of hope and a good deal of vision for a changing farming community and world of the future. They are embracing business acumen, new technology, farming change and the realisation of what will be their vision in the next five to ten years.

When talking to the Prime Minister I mentioned the most vulnerable people and the work of care farms, but obviously he had a number of meetings that day and it is hoped it would be remembered.

One of my other jobs is to be a member of the Patient Liaison Group for the British Medical Association (BMA), and a lot of research is being done at the moment on health issues in rural areas. Also other organisations such as MIND have discovered in one of their pieces of research that the most isolated people experiencing mental health problems were young people, ethnic minorities and people in rural communities. Similarly, the BMA found that mental and chronic health cases were often more prevalent in rural and remote areas and that GPs working in farming communities had to deal with a greater prevalence of anxiety, depression and suicide. The causes are all related to poor housing, lower education attainment, isolation, access problems and so on.

There is now a good deal of analysis going on and the government is interested in us providing solutions and what I think we need to do is pick up the political agenda and say this is the problem and what are the solutions. However when you come to discuss health issues in rural areas there is no one single solution. I would stress that the work must indeed continue.

I believe that care farming creates an opportunity for farmers to diversify into an activity for which there is not only demand but that for rural areas in particular there is abundant need. A network such as the NCFI (UK) can play an essential role in spreading the knowledge, understanding and enthusiasm of a movement that has the potential to deliver an enormous benefit to a great number of people both in rural and urban areas.

I had the good fortune of visiting, on the recommendation of Sir Don Curry, the Park family at Low Sizergh farm in Cumbria last month. The Parks are tenants of the National Trust on the Sizergh Castle Estate. On the farm there is a thriving farm shop which amongst many things has the best array of cheeses I have ever seen, including some made with the farm's organic milk. There are many things you can do when visiting – a craft gallery, tea room with a large viewing window overlooking the milking parlour, so that from mid afternoon visitors can watch the cows being milked. As they say in the brochure, "that's a sight you don't often see with afternoon tea!" It is a marvellous place and I would commend it to you. What was particularly interesting to me was their "Growing Well" Project, which is a social enterprise horticultural project based on five polytunnels on a six acre site, combining the growing of organic vegetable with the provision of mental health support and horticultural training. The principal aim is to support people recovering from mental health issues to return to

work by offering them volunteering opportunities throughout the running of the company. A marvellous example of what could be done.

I would like to conclude by saying we are committed to this, as we are all converted to it already but it is something that is important, something that is inspiring and something which hopefully capture people's imagination. The questions now: -

‘What we do with it?’

‘How do we raise the political awareness around it?’

Yesterday I had a meeting with the Permanent Secretary of Defra and I told her what I was doing today, about this conference, about some of the work that lies behind it. She of course had not really heard about it and so one of the things we need to do is to ensure that right at the heart of government they know what we are doing and essential that we are all true advocates of this particular work.

Finally, I would like to say I am personally very committed to it and if there is anyway I can personally ‘move on’ the agenda then I would be pleased to do it. We all realise that against the back cloth of government cut backs in spending, that it is not an easy time to work with government. Everything is being clawed back and there are redundancies in Defra, in the DTI and so on, but there is an opportunity if we grasp it and perhaps within the Comprehensive Spending Review there may be a ‘chink of light’ that political support may come. So let's be committed and united in this and really go for the political agenda as well.

5.2 Rachel Hine – Senior Research Officer, University of Essex

Results of Initial Research Findings – who is care farming in the UK? How many farms? Why & how?



Background to Initial Research

It is a pleasure to be here at the 2nd Care Farming Conference. I am a senior researcher at the University of Essex and a member of the NCFI (UK) steering group. Care farming has been great for me as it has brought together my research interests in sustainable agriculture, multifunctionality and green exercise

In my talk today I am going to cover briefly the recent research carried out by the team at the University of Essex into the health benefits of contact with nature, look at Green Care and where it sits in relation to agriculture and other contexts such as what is

happening in Europe and then shed more light on the situation in the UK and initial findings from the survey as to who is care farming i.e. the number of care farms, and who is doing what, and how and why?

From the background to our University of Essex research, the scoping study shows the four key influencing factors on health and well being are diet, physical activity, nature and social capital. Now diet and physical activity are *familiar primary roles* to good health, and there is extensive research showing benefits to health. The less familiar roles those of nature and social capital (contact with other people) are not immediately thought of in terms of our health and well being. These are relatively new elements and are considered *secondary roles*. Basically all these 4 factors combine and interact, and lead to healthy individuals and communities i.e. leading to reduced public health costs.

I'll talk very briefly about each of the 4 components just to put them into context.

- Over last 50 years we have become disconnected with our food. We eat more processed food, there is more salt and sugar in our food, more fizzy drinks and alcohol are consumed. We eat 34% fewer vegetables compared to 50 years ago (UK). Due to the loss of our connection to food, and the changes in what we eat, there has been an increase in diet related chronic diseases in adults and in children. For example, chronic heart disease, strokes, and now type 2 diabetes in children. This I think is truly scary problem and has not been seen before - parents could possibly outlive their children. Obesity has resulted in a number of articles in the media, the issue being raised by the government, and is now seen in 20% of UK adults and 16% of UK children.
- The story is similar with physical activity, where levels have fallen dramatically in the last 50 years too, as we drive more and have more sedentary lifestyles. 63% of men and 75% of women do not exercise enough to benefit their health, and we spend 500kcal less energy a day than 50 years ago, which is equivalent to running a marathon a week.
- How nature influences our health is often not immediately considered but there is extensive research into the mental health benefits of contact with nature and green spaces. The Biophilia Hypothesis, a theory put forward by Edward Wilson, states that humans have an innate sensitivity to and need for other living things. This desire for contact with nature is hardwired into our genetic make up and is an important resource for human health.
- What do we mean by social capital? This is our connection to other people, our networks, our sense of neighbourliness, relations of trust, reciprocity and the many social groups and established networks that bind people together. Healthier communities have many links with other people i.e. higher levels of social capital. The World Health Organisation tells us that strong social networks benefit our health. Outdoor places also provide great opportunities for people to connect to each other as well as to nature.

At the University of Essex four years ago we developed the concept of Green Exercise because we identified the following: -

- Physical activity can positively affect health and well-being.
- Exposure to nature is known to have positive effects on mental health

We hypothesised that there may be a *synergistic benefit* in combining participation in physical activities whilst at the same time being directly exposed to nature. We called this “**Green Exercise**”.

We took this forward and identified three levels of engagement with nature – ranging from viewing nature at one end of the scale right through to active participation i.e. making a conscious decision to engage with nature. The three levels of nature are: -

1. Viewing nature - seeing through a window or looking at a painting or photograph.
2. Incidental exposure to nearby nature - walking or cycling to work or sitting in a garden or park.
3. Active participation – gardening, farming, trekking, camping, cross country running, horse-riding, fishing etc.

We recognised the need for more empirical studies and have conducted various research studies on Green Exercise at all 3 levels. Today I want to touch on two particular aspects of research we have conducted, one on viewing nature and the other on active participation with nature.

In our initial study the aim was to determine the effects of exercise conducted on a treadmill whilst exposed to a series of different photographic scenes. This work has been published¹ and was based on a 100 subjects, split into 5 groups, who looked at scenes depicting either rural pleasant, rural unpleasant, urban pleasant, urban unpleasant or no pictures at all (control group). The subjects were on the treadmill for 20 minutes looking at the revolving photographs in front of them and we wanted to measure the effects in the following ways: -

- 2 physiological measures – heart rate and blood pressure
- 2 psychological measures – self esteem and mood

We measured immediately before and after the exercise and the effect of the different scenes and of the physical activity. The key findings showed that -

- Exercise alone significantly reduced blood pressure, increased self-esteem and improved 4 of 6 mood measures
- However both rural and urban pleasant generated a significantly *greater positive affect* on self esteem etc
- By contrast both rural and urban unpleasant scenes *reduced* the positive effects of green exercise on self-esteem, especially if the rural unpleasant pictures were 'badly affected' areas then the subjects felt very down after seeing the images
- Findings suggested exercise whilst exposed to pleasant green environments has a greater effect than exercise alone on blood pressure and mental health and wellbeing. Therefore supporting our hypothesis of the synergistic benefits of Green Exercise.

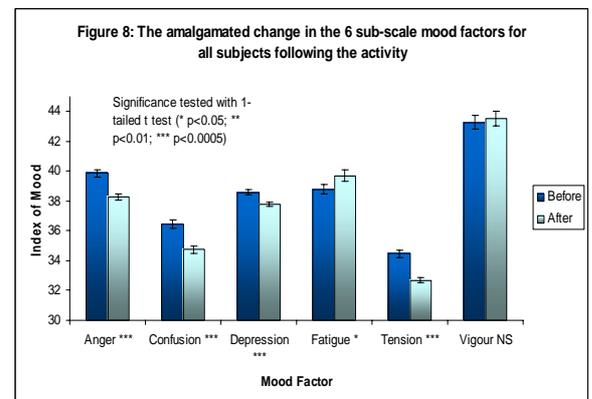
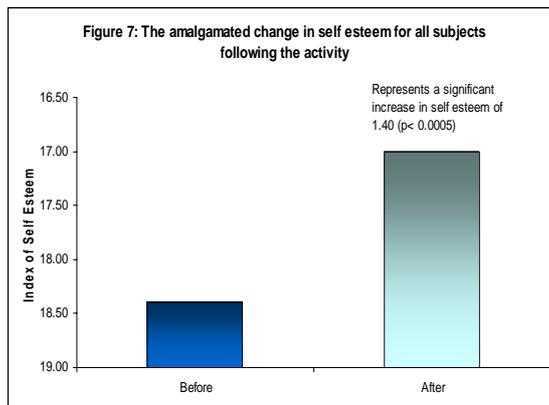
The second study conducted in late 2005 for the Countryside Recreation Network focuses on the health benefits of active participation with nature². This analyses the health benefits of existing green exercise projects, we looked at 10 projects in a geographical spread, that comprised different activities, different levels of intensity

¹ Pretty J, Peacock J, Sellens M and Griffin M. 2005. The mental and physical health outcomes of green exercise. *International Journal of Environmental Health Research* 15(5) 319-337

² Pretty J, Peacock J, Hine R, Sellens M, South N and Griffin M. 2006. Green Exercise in the UK Countryside: Effects on Health and Psychological Well-Being, and Implications for Policy and Planning. *Journal of Environmental Planning and Management* 50 211-231

and duration, different types of habitat, group and individual activities, organised or informal sessions. We wanted to know if these activities made a difference, and so we tested the participants before and after their green exercise activity.

A snapshot of the key findings is shown in the figures below: -



There was a significant increase in participants' self esteem and a significant reduction in anger, confusion, depression and tension from involvement in all of the projects that people were engaged in. This shows that it did not matter which activity people were engaged in, whether they were involved in conservation work or fishing for example, the health benefits occurred. It also didn't seem to matter how long people spent green exercising, the health benefits occurred whether people were outside for 20 minutes or 3 hours. The conclusion of this study is that there is a significant health and wellbeing dividend from a wide range of Green Exercise activities.

Future Research: From Green Exercise to Green Care

The findings of our previous research suggested that therapeutic applications of green exercise could be effective, and this we termed "green care" and this is the focus of present and future research at the University of Essex. We are for example

- repeating the treadmill study with cardiac rehabilitation patients
- conducting a feasibility study of working with a local mental health partnership trust to compare six weeks of green exercise with six weeks of cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT) as treatment options for patients suffering from mild-moderate depression
- conducting research into care farming - the use of farms and agricultural landscapes for the promotion of physical health and mental well-being

We know there are psychological benefits of being exposed to nature whether it be nearby nature (local parks, green spaces etc) or a wilderness experience. This evidence comes as no surprise to most of us but unfortunately it is not part of health or social care policy, or the food and farming agenda. It is not considered by planners when building new homes – there is often little consideration of providing accessible green spaces. Nearby nature has to be accessible and it has to be near to where you live so people use it.

Multifunctionality of Agriculture

I want to talk about farming as for a number of years I have been involved in the field of sustainable agriculture and promoting the concept of multifunctionality in agriculture. The fact that agriculture gives us much more than food production, the

concept of multifunctionality, is regarded by many as one of the future goals of UK and European agriculture, and so an alternative to the reduction in the number of farms. In the past we have often concentrated on the negative side-effects or externalities of agriculture but it is now time to concentrate on the positive side effects.

- So multifunctionality is a new model for farming – a new way of thinking of what farms can provide for us – public services. Farming has already started to be recognised for services to wildlife with changes in Common Agricultural Policy, Single Payment Scheme, Environmental stewardship etc - helping biodiversity and the preserving the aesthetic landscape of our countryside. Farms should be recognised for all the potential in these areas, (food, carbon sequestration, flood protection, clean water, social capital, leisure and recreation, historic features etc) including the provision of health services as a means of 'green care'.

What is Green Care?

There are several key questions e.g.

- What is it?
- What does it set out to do?
- How does it fit with health and social care systems?
- What is it achieving and for whom?

There is no one answer, there is huge variety both within countries and across Europe, but there are overarching common elements throughout: using nature to improve health and 'wellbeing'.

Under the umbrella of Green Care fall: -

- Care farming (using agricultural landscapes and process to provide health and well-being benefits)
- Social and Therapeutic Horticulture (SHT) activities to provide specific health and wellbeing benefits. See the work of THRIVE and Joe Sempik at Loughborough University
- Animal Assisted Therapy (AAT) - using animals to assist therapy
- Other nature related therapies – Ecotherapy, Ecopsychology and Onotherapy (using contact with donkeys to improve human health)

There is so much variety: -

- Activities
 - Farming activities, animal care, horticulture, specific therapy activities, exposure to nature and more
- Clients/ participants/ patients/ volunteers
 - Mental health, psychiatric patients, social service clients, depression, bi-polar disorder, dementia, Alzheimer's, autism, stress, children, disaffected youth, elderly, drug/alcohol rehab., M.E., physical disability, burn-out, offenders, probation and more
- Benefits (related to needs and motivation)
 - Physical and mental health, well-being, specific therapeutic goals, social skills, security, natural rhythms, education, skills, work training, quality of life and much more
- Contexts

- Farms, city farms, horticultural gardens, healing gardens, hospitals, residential, non-residential, therapeutic communities, day care facilities, school farms and more

The 'penny seems to be dropping' at last about the benefits of nature in respect of good health and mental wellbeing.

Care Farming in Europe

What is happening in Europe? The movement is growing apace as there are several hundred care farms in Europe. In Norway there are 500 care farms, in the Netherlands 600, and also in Italy, Germany, Austria, Belgium, Slovenia and now much interest in UK, Ireland, Sweden, Poland, France and many more countries.

There are also differences in what we call it e.g. Farming for Health, Care Farming, Social Farming - many different terms. There will not be agreement on what to call it. The Netherlands are ahead of many other countries, as the Dutch government was brave enough to see the merit and go for it, and now there is an established care farming support infrastructure and care farming is recognised as a mainstream therapy option. Many other countries are in the same position as the UK but all countries are facing the same research issues.

There are lots of qualitative and anecdotal data but there is lack of formal evaluation, research and statistics, and there are quite large methodological and theoretical challenges to the research. However, there are research initiatives currently underway examining the physical, mental and social health benefits of green care for various populations and groups. Particularly I should mention that Wageningen University in the Netherlands are looking at the effect of green care farms on quality of life of people with dementia and those with a psychiatric and/ or drug addiction background, and the Norwegian University of Life Sciences are looking at the health benefits of Animal Assisted Therapy on farms for people with mental health disorders. Research is happening but this is obviously not an instant process.

I know that many people here are familiar with the Farming for Health³ network and Community of Practice (CoP) but for those that are not - it is a network of practitioners and care providers, researchers and interested parties from many countries in Europe. They recognised the need for more robust and quantitative evidence into benefits of care farming and as a result set about to initiate COST 866 Green Care in Agriculture⁴.

COST stands for the - European **CO**operation in the field of **Scientific** and **Technical** research and the main objective of the Action is to increase the scientific knowledge of Green Care in agriculture and the associated mental health, physical health and quality of life benefits. One of the major reasons for this action is to solve the research issues, methodological and theoretical challenges to research, and also to improve efficiency, ensure optimal methods, and increase the scientifically validated output.

What is Care Farming?

Definition: Green Care or care farming is the utilisation of agricultural farms as a base for promoting human mental and physical health - combining productive farming with elements of health and social care. *Nurturing the land and nurturing the people.*

³ See www.farmingforhealth.org

⁴ See www.umb.nor/greencare

It is the use of animals, crops, gardens, woodlands and the agricultural landscape in work related activities for a range of participants. The health sector and social services need alternatives to traditional medical treatment, therapy and work training. Farmers can be paid (as they are in Europe) for providing a kind of “health service” whilst continuing with agriculture, so it can help to maintain economic viability of farms, who can benefit from extra labour and still sell produce etc.

While the term “care farming” is well-recognised in Europe, in the UK, the concept is relatively new. There is, however, an increasing amount of interest from many sectors (including farmers, health care professionals and social care providers, the prison and probation services).

National Care Farming Initiative (UK)

The National Care Farming Initiative (UK) was started to promote and support the expansion of care farming in the UK and has gone ‘from strength to strength’. We have taken what you told us at the last conference and built on it to achieve some of the objectives that you decided were important. I am going to update you on one aspect of this– building up the evidence base - i.e. Stage 1 Research.

Stage 1 Research is multi-faceted and will provide: -

- A systematic and critical review of published evidence for the benefits (physical and mental health and well-being) of care farming.
- An initial overview of the range and number of current care farming initiatives currently operating in the UK
- In depth health benefit analysis of at least 5 case studies
- Advice on good practice for appraising care farming activities in the countryside including an analysis of criteria for evaluation and a commentary on examples of good practice in appraisal, monitoring and evaluation
- Implications for policy
- An overview of further research priorities

There is increasing interest in Green Care and the health benefits of exposure to nature here in the UK in many contexts. For example, offender and nature schemes – a partnership between offender management organisations and nature conservation organisations. I’m sure many of you watched Monty Don in his recent TV programme ‘Growing out of Trouble’ working with young people on probation on a farm. Monty was hoping to come to the conference today but he is filming in China so wishes us all the best for today. He really did raise the profile and made people think that this might work.

Another project also raising the Green Care profile is Natural England and their Green Exercise campaign. Additionally there are over 900 Social and Therapeutic Horticulture projects in the UK. Interest in the benefits of nature for health is now being shown by healthcare professionals, social services providers, local authorities, probation services, youth services, education authorities as well as those engaged in farming.

Interestingly, in Ireland a similar scoping project is underway as part of the European-wide SoFar initiative, researchers at University College Dublin are trying to find out how many farmers are social farming/ care farming in Ireland.

Interim Findings of the Research Study

These are interim findings with 43 care farms in study so far but as we are still receiving questionnaires I expect the figure to be much higher. Also a reminder to those practitioners here, who have not yet completed theirs, that they can still do so.

There are other contexts which are likely to include some Care Farms:

- 59 City farms
- 66 School farms
- 5 Prison farms
- 47 Camphill Trust
- 40 Therapeutic communities
- 1,000 community gardens
- Access to Farms schemes

So there is a lot of access to farms which is giving people some kind of health, social or educational benefit.

Farms vary in size from 0.4ha to 360ha, they are mixed farms - most have livestock of some kind, but often have grazing, woodland and arable too. The length of time they have been Care Farming varies from 1 to 34 years, and the number of days a week care farming is offered varies from 1 to 7, but the majority do not offer residential care (13 do). With respect to the type of organisation – 40% are farms, 28% are charity and/or companies limited by guarantee and 28% are city farms. The main groups of people/clients served are service users with learning difficulties (93%), disaffected youth (60%), mental health needs (53%) and those with autism (51%). There were approximately 3,500 users per week coming through the 43 farms with some being self referred, others through social or probation services, and also some 35% being referred by local authority or pupil referral teams. Most of the care farms on the database had multiple groups, mixing people together, which brought its own benefits. The number employed on these farms were 153 full time equivalents (FTE), 135 part-time workers and 320+ volunteers, thereby providing an impact on the local rural economy.

Financial issues are the key in Care Farming and are both a challenge and a source of opportunity for the future. Fees, if they are charged at all, vary enormously, both in terms of how much and how calculated. A number received nothing! For example, we have £36 per day, £8 per hour, £45 per hour (group of 8), £19 per client or per session. It would be difficult to tell a new practitioner what to charge, there is a need for some uniformity here.

Sources of funding are multiple and often hard to find. One or two had received all their funding from the Learning and Skills Council, but most had funding from many sources. For example, self-generated 44%, local authorities 40%, charitable trusts 40%, client fees (direct) 26%, client fees (paid by healthcare trusts) 26% and Learning and Skills Council 21%.

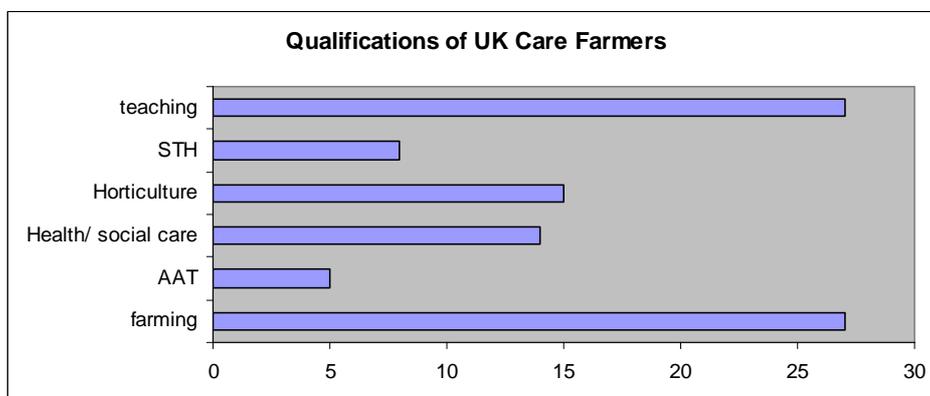
There were all sorts of different reasons as to why people want to set up a care farm, many of them very passionate but the main motivations stated were: -

- to make a difference,
- to extend a service,
- to give opportunity to vulnerable or disadvantaged groups,

- to provide a connection to nature.

With respect to the type of site most (25%+) described their premises as farms.

Qualifications of UK Care Farms can be seen in the graph below: -



The qualifications and training mostly claimed were of teaching and farming, with others having horticulture or health/social care skills.

In the questionnaire we also asked about the benefits and challenges of running a care farm.

Benefits of care farming on the participants we split into physical, mental and social. Results were often across the board and a summary can be seen in the table below.

Benefits of Care Farming in terms of physical health, mental health and well-being and social skills.

Benefits of Care Farming		
Physical	Mental Health and well-being	Social
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other skills (86%) • Improved physical health (84%) • Farming skills (79%) • Other 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased self-esteem (91%) • Increased Well-being (88%) • Improved mood (81%) • Increased awareness (79%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team work (88%) • Social skills (84%) • Personal responsibility (84%) • Work habit (81%) • Work success • Independence

Seeing the effects of care farming on people, making a difference to people’s lives as seen in the table above shows what a success this type of activity can be. A lot of positive feedback e.g. “*Helping the excluded become included*”, or “*allowing me (a carer) to function as a normal person again*”. Better to put the money into care farms than pick up the pieces afterwards!

Also of course it is worth mentioning the benefits to the local rural economies too, one farmer reported that: “*we have also brought over £1m over the last 7yrs to the local rural economy and given over 25 people jobs*”. Anything that gets people back into jobs in the rural community must be a good thing.

The answers on 'challenges experienced' from almost every single respondent put funding and resources at the top of their lists along with legitimacy, health and safety and insurance. The funding needs to be sustainable and farmers want more advice on sourcing monies. Care farming also needs to be seen as legitimate (i.e. suitable for mainstream) so that it is acceptable and not just dismissed as either a farming or a health issue but both. These are the issues that farmers tell us that they need the NCFI (UK) to help with.

What is special about Care Farming?

I'll let the farmers explain it best:

"Care farming is special for us because we see the benefits to individuals who sometimes come to us with a long history of social exclusion, complex mental health issues and learning disabilities. To see these people thrive and develop within our project and sometimes move on to employment is very gratifying"

"Farm work and animals in particular are a great way to break down barriers and outdoor work can be of particular therapeutic benefit."

"Several hundred young people and adults who were disadvantaged in some way have been given the opportunity to fulfil their potential and escape the day centre or failing mainstream education trap"

"To see others benefit from our lovely farm that we ourselves so enjoy. It is a privilege to see the progress created in others' lives, simply by sharing the farm livestock & environment with them"

"Nice to see farming putting a smile on someone's face"

How to take care farming forward?

- Farmers need a scientific basis for green care services, and they need development of health policies and economical systems that make such services a predictable income.
- Inclusion of care farming into policy agendas
 - Agriculture
 - Health care
 - Social service provision
 - Social inclusion
 - Probation and offender management
- Engagement of *all* stakeholders – need to tell them about the benefits
- Research - Policy makers and service providers alike need hard evidence of the benefits of care farming – physical and mental health, social, economic - to justify existence and to secure funding. There is a need for care farmers to evaluate what they have achieved.
- NCFI(UK) will continue to promote and support the expansion of care farming throughout the UK
 - Support existing care farmers
 - Sourcing funding and sharing good practice
 - Providing legitimacy

As one care farmer expressed it "*It's my life*". Care farming is a real passion that can benefit all of us and that is one reason that I am so proud to be part of this initiative. Thank you.

5.3 Professor Wynne Jones – Principal, Harper Adams University College

Care: The Agricultural Perspective.

The Agricultural Business Environment

Part of what makes the study of agriculture an exciting and stimulating field of engagement is the breadth of knowledge required to inform judgements about sustainable practices. When you ponder the issues which have to be considered relevant to the commercial prospects for farming and food production, the scale is awesome.

A key event in 2005 under the CAP reform has been the introduction of the Single Farm Payment Scheme which replaces eleven CAP payment schemes with one single payment and decouples subsidies from production.

This new public policy in relation to agriculture will result in a more market driven agriculture (private goods). A single farm payment is made linked to environmental criteria, which makes explicit the widely-recognised responsibility which farmers have been discharging to maintain the landscape and manage the livestock of the countryside. It may also serve to remind farmers that their care for the environment is valued by the community and which encourages them to become environmental advocates. These are generally classified as public goods.

The management of natural resources, in particular soil and water are high on the agenda of responsibility for farmers, after all agriculture uses 70% of the world's fresh water and is a major user of land. Appropriate directives are in place for this. One of the challenges for the farmer is to convince the market that a premium value should be attached to the food which is produced from this caring approach to animals and the environment.

One consequence of the changes to agricultural policy has been to allow the prices of agricultural commodities such as cereals to directly reflect the levels and changes in international markets. Thus alterations in the global food position have a direct bearing on the financial prospects of farmers in this country. Will the increasing affluence in India and China fuel demand for food at the same time as their industrialisation is forcing down the prices of basic manufactures? Both countries recently became net exporters of wheat. World grain stocks are at their lowest for some 20 years. These questions matter. Our global challenge for the next generation is to double food production from possibly less land and water. Thus in future farmers will need to be much more focussed on world market conditions, financial exchange rates and climate conditions than hitherto as they make the change from a subsidised agriculture towards a knowledge driven bio economy.

Equally global in conception is the consideration of climate change and its likely consequences. The advantages of rainfall on offshore island agriculture may be accentuated in a world with larger arid areas at a time when the official agencies (i.e. FAO) are forecasting greater dependence on irrigated cereal crops.

The focus on climate change has added to widespread interest supported by considerable investment in bioenergy. This energy production could become an important farm enterprise in future.

The scope of these examples illustrates that the agricultural perspective on 'care' is likely to be anything but one-eyed.

The Agricultural Portfolio

The downward spiral in net farm incomes has been a key driver in compelling the industry to recognise that change was required, and that this change had to be managed. Some of the options are illustrated below.



Source: Anon., Andersons

It may be an indication of the success of persistent encouragement to farm diversification that a majority of farms are now 'something else as well'; meaning that primary food production is supplemented by some form of non-farm-but-on-farm enterprise, frequently family-led (e.g. by a spouse or daughter or son).

The National Women in Rural Enterprise (WiRE) business club, which has its origins here at Harper, provides an excellent example of a model which facilitates, energises, supports and assists in financing new business opportunities in rural areas. Women entrepreneurs are crucial to the success of any economy.

In fact, there are numerous instances in which farms have become virtually micro-business-parks! This emphasises the open-ness to innovation of the agricultural community: their ability and willingness to learn.

Farming and the Rural Economy

The importance of farming's contribution to the economy can easily be misperceived. Taking agricultural production on its own, accounting for less than one-and-a-half percent of Gross Domestic Product and about the same proportion of the working population, is routinely used to diminish the importance of farming's contribution to the business of the countryside. However, recognising the economic significance of the self-employed as key agents of the innovation required for sustainability, it is worth reminding ourselves that nearly half the working population of agriculture is self-employed; and that farmers constitute more than 5% of self-employment as a whole (and more than that in rural areas of course, though not nearly a majority). As a significant group of experienced entrepreneurs with a good understanding of the rural

context farmers are well-placed to judge the potential of new business ideas. The Agri-food industry is a major employer at 14% of the working population. Much of the food industry processing is located in rural areas.

The Rural Community

The repopulation of rural England that has been taking place in recent years has been well publicised. Of particular concern has been the age-profile of those in-migrants, with a noticeably higher fraction of those living in rural areas being around and above retirement age. This means that issues relating to health, care and access to community services have been expected to feature particularly in the countryside. Since the costs of delivery of such services are naturally higher in these areas (owing fundamentally to unavoidable considerations of distances and travel times) there will be especial interest in alternative suppliers from private or from social enterprise.

Farms and Social Enterprise

There has always been a strong sense of community in rural areas. More recently we have witnessed the work of the Farm Crises and the Rural Support Networks aimed at supporting those businesses in difficulty as they encountered experiences such as the Foot and Mouth Disease epidemic in 2001.

When it comes to banding together to achieve critical mass necessary to exercise a degree of market influence (whether as purchasers or suppliers) farmers have a historical pedigree based on the operation of many successful agricultural co-operatives. Indeed the knowledge of both the strengths and weaknesses of co-operative ventures could be of signal value to the development of farm-based care-service activities.

The English Farming and Food Partnerships (EFFP), one of the initiatives to derive from Sir Don Surry's Sustainable Farming and Food Strategy, has highlighted many successful examples of co-operation and collaboration. The importance of enhancing profit with sustainability has added the impetus to partnerships and collaboration in the food supply chain as it responds to an increasingly sophisticated market and consumer.

Farms and Standards

Farmers have become familiar with the importance to be attached to standards and quality assurance in relation to food produce, growing practices and livestock husbandry. The National Dairy Farmers Assurance Scheme and Assured Combinable Crops are good examples. There have also been a number of highly successful initiatives such as Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG), and LEAF which provided vehicles of knowledge transfer, shared understanding to promulgate good professional practice.

It will be important to transfer the lessons of such experience to new areas of business, and particularly to areas as sensitive as the provision of personal care.

Farmers, Professionalism and Learning

Farming is becoming even more complex and multidisciplinary as new enterprises, for example energy production and social care, are added to the existing portfolio of producing commodities, adding value to foods, farmers markets and other diversification. It is a major challenge for small rural based businesses to be able to keep up with all the demands made upon them. There is a considerable challenge for

organisations serving the industries to emerge with a learning, development, knowledge transfer system to ensure that businesses remain competitive and responsive. These need to recognise and value the experiential skills and abilities of the rural entrepreneur.

Summary

Farmers continue to care for the landscape and livestock of the countryside, as they always have done; this is recognised widely amongst the community; the explicitly environmental aspects of the conditions for receiving the Single Farm Payment emphasise this recognition; as farmers become accustomed to adopting the role of environmental advocate expected of them, it may seem natural to harness their environmental advantage to further public benefit. The breadth of vision required to make reliable judgements in the field of agricultural production should serve to guard against narrow opportunism. However, although health and social care services will be attractive and viable options for some people in some places it will be important to emphasise and to demonstrate commitment to professional standards of operation.

5.4 David Chantler – Chief Probation Officer, West Mercia

Care Farming on Probation



This is my second appearance here at Harper Adams University College as I came as an interested delegate to your first conference in 2005.

This time I am here as I was involved as an advisor with the recent TV series 'Growing out of Trouble' and I am rapidly becoming the "poor man's Monty Don!" I will however commend his book that came out of the series⁵, as it is based essentially on the journals that the offenders kept during the 18 months and gives a good account of what happened and what it is like working with those on probation.

A few facts that you may have heard from the series are that over 30% of men under the age of 30 have convictions for offences that could have got them a prison sentence. That is actual convictions, not that they did it and got away with it, they

⁵ The book is available from Amazon at £8 (RRP £12)

actually were convicted, so as you can see a large proportion of men. The British Crime Survey states that for every 100 offences only one gets a sentence in court, so roughly speaking for every 100 offences that take place, 50 are not reported, 50% of the remainder are detected, and it works out that 1% are sentenced. Some 10% of offenders commit 50% of crimes, and they are mainly men but few are caught. The point I really want to bring out is that few people are so bad that their criminality defines them. There are a few 'angels' that never commit crimes, but most of us live in the grey area.

If you are thinking about working with offenders it is not a world of 'them and us' because 'they are us' to a very large extent. There is also very much less need than you might think to be afraid of working with this group. My guess is that most people are concerned about working with drug misusing offenders. The TV series shows you that heroin quite rapidly puts you to sleep, and you could see some of them nodding off as Monty Don was speaking. It is not surprising as heroin is related to morphine. The drugs that have caused me the most concern through my 30 years of working in the probation service are those offenders suffering from solvent and alcohol abuse, as both these substances are legal but cause a lot of people to be aggressive, active and often quite dangerous. It is rumoured that this is why prisons often turned a blind eye to the 'more' dangerous drugs such as heroin as it leads to a quiet 'nick'!

I said I wanted to say something about offenders as a group – they are not actually a group. For example, a sex offender is no more likely to be dishonest with money than anyone else, even violent offenders are most likely to be violent towards their friends late at night near to a pub. If you are worried about being murdered, do not worry too much about the offender on the care farm, it is usually the spouse "what done it"!

Probation has been office based for too long, our history of engagement with communities submerged in a wish to be seen as business like and punitive. Offenders come to us in our offices and the opportunities for meaningful engagement are necessary limited. Earlier in my career I worked in Grendon Prison which operates on the lines of a therapeutic community with almost 75% of its population being lifers with mental health problems and it operates a low risk violence rule and does not use medication. Having moved to Shropshire from the South East I became increasingly interested in the local economy and in particular on food production and the employment built around it. I am a Director of the Ludlow Food Festival and joined the 'Slow Food' organisation when we moved here.

So when Monty Don contacted me through the BBC his plans and my work seemed made for each other. We developed the 'Growing out of Crime' project aimed at prolific offenders. This was not the first collaboration between the probation service and the BBC as a few years ago we had helped out with the 'Ed Grundy's' story line for the Radio 4 Archers programme, when young Ed was placed on probation.

The point I was trying to make about the crossover with therapeutic communities was demonstrated in the 'Growing out of Crime' project when one of the female participants in the TV series, the one perhaps the project did least for, who towards the climax of the project disputed with Monty the pricing policy of the produce they were selling at the Ludlow Food Festival. This was no small thing, as they cleared several thousand pounds at the three day festival, but more importantly it was she who wanted to take control even if that meant challenging the project leader. One of the reasons I would commend care farming as an approach for working with offenders is that it does provide an environment in which people can test out what it is they have to offer and what their ideas are. It allows people to engage in a therapeutic way with those supposedly in charge as to who has the best ideas and to test that out in practice. I actually bitterly regret that Monty won that battle, as he decided to sell the

products in a plastic bag at £5 per time, whereas Katie wanted to make more money by selling the items individually. We may have gained more by allowing her to see if her approach would have been right. The main point is that we created the context which allowed that discussion to take place.

There is something magical about working with the soil, and I am not denying that growing things is not an appropriate vehicle for people who almost by definition do not think or see things through, however I am also quite clear that what mattered most was having strong male role models both in Monty and in Rocky (a member of our probation staff who worked with the project throughout).

It was also important that the project reflected their rural experiences and life chances, and represented their community or a community very like theirs, who were embracing them and not turning them away. It is also important that the less valued members of our community are not turned away from their rural communities i.e. that they are not sent to cities to work in poorly paid jobs, but that we hold on to even the most unpromising of individuals. That was the lesson from Monkland the first village we went to in Herefordshire where we tried to establish a project. If you saw the TV series you will see we did not necessarily get the public relations right. What was significant for me was as the villagers were organising their village meeting and vote, and they decided over four or five weeks that they did not want to endorse the project, the offenders had not really focused on that issue, but had taken a sense of ownership of the site and really wanted to go there. When we were turned away we discovered that the offenders who would normally have run a mile from parish council matters and councillors, and knew these people were angry, wanted to go and show them that they did not have 'two heads' and could be trusted. I think that notion that we can hold people rather than push them over the parish boundary is something the idea of care farming holds within it, which is very powerful.

So essentially the plan for that project was to find land for a small holding, all the work to be done by offenders, for them to learn rural skills and become self-sufficient and grow ingredients for their own meals. Later we introduced the idea of working towards the Food Festival as a grand gesture to the outside world. Initially, we were going to have crops only but Monty got the better of my judgement and we ended up having pigs, sheep and chickens.

What lessons did we learn?

- Once the motivation had been gained from the offenders they started getting up earlier, go to market, and could do a reasonable day's work, which is not something heroin addicts can usually manage.
- Improvement in physical health – they stopped their intake of fizzy drinks and started consuming the healthier food we were providing. This was particularly noticed on the open day by police/prison officers who knew them and commented on their improved well-being.
- We did eventually encourage them not to be such finicky eaters and accept that not everything had to come in a 'Tesco' wrapper.

What did we achieve?

- Nearly all of them gave up drugs for the some part of the project and that is actually a success as it has given them a period of normality for a period of four or five weeks that they will always have. It is a point they can reflect upon in the future and know that they did maintain it at one time.
- About half the participants became clean which was demonstrated by the regular drug tests.
- Some have obtained employment and other are looking for work

- One of the most striking and happy outcomes, that we were not looking for in the beginning, was the reconciliation with their families. At the open day offenders who had been previously disowned by their families were proudly showing those families around the project and taking an enormous pride in their achievements.
- On the criminal side, you may recall Katie in the TV series mention the amount of shop lifting to finance her heroin habit and it could be up to £1,000 per week she would steal. This would translate into some £52,000 per year, so three Katie's could have paid for the whole project.

So the big question is how we get the costs to society and insurance companies at the end of the process reworked into investments at the beginning of the process. We spend the money no matter which way you look at it, but we spend it on financing failure rather than investing for success.

Why did it Work?

- The group setting provided a context for group dynamics to take over
- An increase in skills, but we did not just focus on attainment of individual skills but all were dealt with as an organic whole e.g. basic, social, team, motivational or vocational skills were covered
- An improvement in behaviour and we are not sure whether this was down to diet (there is interesting research from Aylesbury Young Offender Institution), or was the socialising effect as for first time in their lives they were 'breaking bread' together
- The discipline of preparing, ploughing and harvesting was important for people for whom even instant gratification is too slow
- Some of the improvement was simply that there were no shops to steal from
- Importance of motivation cannot be understated, because even with the cameras rolling we had to work hard to get the offenders engaged, because these are amongst the most alienated in society and if they had been self-starting they would not be under our supervision in the first place. It does take a while to work it through and I would say to you be patient, you can do it

Where to now with the project?

We have moved the project as it was not in the right place for the offenders, and so we are in Central Worcestershire and we have expanded it beyond a small holding, and it now includes some 'worked out' gravel pits which there may be 25 acres of potential wildlife. So when there is no work on the small holding the offenders can be working on that area instead.

We are also working closely with SHIFT in South Herefordshire and want to use that more for offenders and we may open a similar project in North Shropshire, so that there are different locations within West Mercia. It must be looked as to whether there can be a shared infrastructure, for example, transporting offenders between sites.

So how do we bring providers and potential users together, as West Mercia although an area in the criminal sector is not synonymous with areas in local or health authorities? So if you are to set up a care farm how do you know what I do in the probation sector and how do I know what you do? However, these problems are not insurmountable and would it not be great if I could shut every probation office in Worcestershire, Herefordshire and Shropshire and concentrate on facilitating community based projects and giving the offenders the space to become restored to

their communities. Only if we can make this happen can we break the cycle of an ever expanding prison system. As I said earlier we are already spending the money, but I would rather spend it on care farms rather than prisons.

5.5 Dr Alastair King – General Manager, Bulmers plc & Trustee, Bulmers Foundation

A few words from the sponsor

Two observations before I start, one is that the level of engagement with this subject matter must be very high, as the front seats got filled up very quickly. Secondly, it is very apt with Bulmers being the largest cider makers in the world that the NCFI (UK) has the apple as part of their logo!

Thinking about what I wanted to say today I reflected on the last conference, 16 months ago, and what I heard people say which was inspirational and quite moving, especially when Roger spoke from Happy Hens. I also heard passion, leadership, courage and people inspiring themselves and each other to form a group so that care farming could obtain support and be taken forward. This helped me understand what we could do at Scottish & Newcastle and Bulmers to help this agenda move forward.

At Scottish & Newcastle and Bulmers we already have a Sustainable Development Agenda, as we are already exploring both environmental and social impacts that we have as a business on society. We are reducing costs on energy, using Renewables, continuing our sponsorship of the Bulmer Foundation and so linked with NCFI (UK). The Foundation is also in partnership with BODS⁶, with whom they have set up a care farm. In terms of measurement one of the main aims of that care farm is to measure and evaluate the benefits, and certainly as a business there will be need for a cost benefit analysis to enable future funding to come from the government.

Bulmer Foundation are also interested in health, in land and in education all of which have been touched on today and show the holistic approach of care farming. We are leading the whole industry in the field of Sustainable Development. Why is NCFI (UK) of interest to us? Because it has stimulated conversations, about the taboo subject of responsible drinking. It is a very serious issue for us as a business and probably the biggest risk to us an industry. So Scottish & Newcastle and Bulmers are taking a holistic approach to responsible drinking and leading the market in changing our packaging and our marketing e.g. putting labels on to bottles with AV levels and warnings. Also working with local authorities to generate an education programme from under ten year olds to the over 16/18 year olds to promote responsible drinking. We have also set up a local support scheme in Hereford for those who have fallen by the wayside, and those who continue to do so to get help or therapy. That is why care farming is so important to us as it is part of the support we at Bulmers wish to offer and completes the cycle.

What is that we can do at Bulmers?

Well we have about 3,000 acres of orchards that we own and we also contract out about another 5,000 acres. This is a huge resource potentially that could be facilitated into a care farm, and we will explore that and see how it will work for us. We do support the rural economy very heavily in Herefordshire, as through all the orchards we own or contract out we feel we have a huge responsibility. One thing that really strikes you when you visit the orchards is the age profile of our farmers, as one of my contract managers might be 75 years old, and a labourer working for him could be 85

⁶ BODS – Bermondsey Outdoors

years old. There are not enough young people going into farming and we at NCFI (UK) need to think about that, as if there are no young farmers, will there be any care farms in the future? So we need to encourage and promote the care farm approach as being very inspirational and moving and of also adding value to society.

What is the role of Scottish & Newcastle and Bulmers in this?

- Listening to, learning from, reflecting on the passion and experience of the practitioners
- Supporting and enabling by providing time, resources and money - hence our support of NCFI (UK)
- Build up awareness of the issues so that we are investing in our joint future by supporting people less fortunate than ourselves. Need to get the 'Right Solutions for the Right Environment'
- Talking to the politicians to spread the news and the good stories about care farming. In the last six months I have held conversations with Defra and HM Treasury about NCFI (UK) and they are excited about it

In summary we that are here today care about our future society, and that is why you do the fantastic work you are doing. Some of us can play a bigger part to help and support others, but if we all do our part then what a great and better society we will live in. At Scottish & Newcastle and Bulmers we have great pride in being associated with NCFI (UK) because we fundamentally believe in its principals.

6. AFTERNOON CHAIRMAN'S ADDRESS

Dr Kim Jobst – Bulmer Foundation

Developments in relationships between healthcare and agriculture in 2006

As you can see from the Conference programme Dr Michael Dixon was due to speak today but has been called away to report to Gordon Brown Chancellor of the Exchequer so I will provide you with some the developments he would have covered.

Michael is a GP, Trustee of the Prince of Wales's Foundation for Integrated Health, Chair of the NHS Alliance amongst many other roles and has a great energy for primary care and the therapeutic elements of health care. He was asked today with a group of people to discuss 'innovative ways of developing health care' as part of a new document called the 'Health and Innovation Framework'. He will no doubt take this fortuitous opportunity to tell them about care farming.

In the last conference I looked at the importance of the power of the mind and how we should be looking at returning to the land and returning to meaning. As a GP everything for me has meaning, every disease, every ailment, and I feel I should be able to prescribe not 'Prozac' but care farming or in our case at Bulmers SHIFT which is Social Healing through Integrated Farming Therapies. Not many people would think that within 15 months this would be realisable. Today, due to recent changes in health care we are in fact permitted to write that as a prescription.

Over the four years that I have been involved with this initiative we have had very little take up from the medical community, and is something we have got to work on, as it is the core essence of what Dr Michael Dixon and myself would like you to think about as you go away after the conference today.

One theme I would like to mention is the word 'spirit' as in my work with Bulmers I discover those that are addicted to alcohol, are so addicted because they are searching for real spirit in their life. The fundamental issue here is one of consciousness. Through working with the NCFI (UK) steering group, which is a very exciting group to be involved with, I have to come to realise the need to embrace and grow our consciousness of what it is that makes a human being well and how they get ill.

Working with the BODS team, my colleagues at Bulmer Foundation, and working with all of you ultimately into the future enables us to see how misguided the 'magic bullet' approach was and is. The level of consciousness from which it arose, is same as that which led to the misguidance of a fertiliser driven agriculture, and how many ways there are of being able to grow understanding of what it takes to create healthy food to sustain a healthy land use and therefore a healthy population.

The medical arena here which Michael wanted us to address has moved so fast in a year that we are no longer being asked to prove that it works therapeutically but only one question i.e. Does it save money?

We can as of now prescribe care farms as a therapeutic endeavour to be paid for by the NHS in the practices where GP's have co-ownership of their own budgets. However, most practices are so cash strapped, so over spent, that they are frightened to do so as they simply do not have the evidence. Michael's one plea was that he be given evidence so he could take it to the practice based commissioners, which shows

it would be more cost effective for them to develop this kind of care in their areas. Then it would be done, provided for, and rolled out across the nation as fast as they can. It is our job then to come together to provide that evidence. We as a steering group will be going away now to rethink some of our strategy so we can get this central idea off the ground. Inside a year it is my prediction that we will have spoken to ministers at the highest levels of government, and we will have evidence to show how cost effective this is, and that there will be money filtering down from government into the service that has to be provided. This time round perhaps, we can try and understand why it is that we need more integrated farming therapies.

In Herefordshire, we have had an extraordinary event take place after a long time of trying to get to care farms off the ground, as we have now an inspired Head of Police, a totally inspired Head of Probation of West Mercia (namely David Chantler), both of who realise that the infrastructure as it currently stands cannot deliver on the government's requirements. So they are looking to change the infrastructure so that enough people can be filtered on to the farm and can licence the premises accordingly. So there is to be a total change in our own county.

In 2010 the farmers will be receiving such a small income compared to the six figure sums of the captains of industry and yet we depend on the farming community for our very livelihoods. There must be a change if we are to help these disparate communities. The three practitioners we have to speak to us this afternoon are practical examples of people who are working towards changing the rural communities, and show how the farming community and the therapeutic farming community can work together to bring money back into the rural areas. It is my desire that the NCFI (UK) will enable you to run the network for yourselves, step across boundaries and obtain the cohesion that David Chantler called for.



7. PRACTITIONERS

The practitioners were welcomed as a group of people with great passion for their organisations. A biographical background to each of the practitioners and their care farms are shown in Appendix 3.

7.1 Tim James-Moore - Houghton Court Farm



I use the family farm for the Houghton Project and my background is in City farms in Bristol which are an organisation that promotes social integration and a venue for those on the edge of society to come together. An example of the people who attended were those suffering from mental health problems, various addiction problems, learning disabilities to those on 'new deal' schemes and school groups. There was a whole cross section of society which some people who would use the place would not necessarily have come across unless there was a focal point to meet. The city farms provide a valuable space where this can be achieved. My evidence is that it contributed very positively to a 'quality of life', and also provided social contact for people who have become isolated.

The evidence mentioned earlier is very hard to provide and how you provide it I have no idea personally! Unless you have experience of how a person has progressed over a year by say providing a video of their life during that time, and you show how the person now has the confidence to do something they did not have the ability to do before. How you demonstrate that to people who need the evidence is very difficult.

When I returned to the countryside I realised a 200/300 acre farm was not going to provide for two incomes, and that there would be need for some diversification. So I did what I know, though I found there was a steep learning curve in attracting people to come to the farm. However, though not ideal as a means of diversification, as you need to have a passion to see people grow and develop as individuals, if it works then it is great and at the farm we have placed a focus on enabling people to realise their strengths, thereby encouraging them to reclaim some personal power.

There are the same principles in a rural setting as in the 'city farm' as there is still restricted access beyond the hedgerow. There is not a right to roam everywhere. We had a lot of redundant buildings and my partner is a social worker so therefore we could speak the social services language, and know policy requirements which helped when we were producing our publicity. My eighty year old father is cooperative, as he has been on his own on the farm for 60 years, and now all of a sudden there are 40+ people on the farm every day, and he is keen to see it continue and it has also changed his perspective.

I have a teaching qualification which I do use to a certain extent, but it does look better on paper, as it can add some sort of professionalism. Also you need a business plan; if you do not run it as a business then you will not survive. At present we are not a charity but a 'not for profit' organisation private limited company and that means I have to think in terms of cash flow.

I try to integrate as many different groups as possible as I do believe strongly in social integration so there are people from pupil referral units, school groups, a college group, people with mental health problems, people with learning disabilities, those recovering from alcohol or drug abuse and those self referred by parents or carers. They do not come in their separate groups they will all come as individuals and mix together, and I feel this is an important thing. I have never encountered any trouble from mixing people and probably less than if I tried to put two school groups together! It promotes understanding of other people; it promotes tolerance of working with others, and this integration I feel is one of the major achievements of the farm. Importantly also it spreads your income as you are not depending on one user group and if there is a change in government policy then you will not be adversely affected by that one change. What we do on that farm is not just relevant to one particular user group.

I would also suggest getting some grants, obviously not that easy if you are not a charity, but it may be possible that there are grants out there for your project. However, becoming a charity is a decision people will have to make for themselves, but I did not feel in the beginning it was for me but maybe now I am up and running I may set up one, as I may be able to attract more funding. At the start of the Houghton project I wanted to be able to make decisions quickly and you cannot always do that if you are a charity.

The other necessity for the project was making a decent leaflet so that there was good publicity that looked professional, so that when you are contacting all these statutory bodies it sets out exactly what you can do, how it will be done, but leave how much it will cost until they contact you.

Good staff is also essential as they bring energy into the place, and if you do not have them it will be difficult to motivate other people to do things outside, especially on a cold and wet day.

So finally I just want to say it is a great project and a great life!

7.2 Edward and Anna Dugdale – Tickwood Farm



The aim of our care farm at Tickwood is to create a haven for children with learning difficulties. One of the features is the forest school which is basically a school room outside and enables children to explore and take risks in a safe environment. There is a walled garden where children have their own plots where they can grow vegetables, fruit and flowers, and we are also creating a sensory garden and raising the beds for wheelchair users to garden. Also we have an orchard, not the size of Bulmers, but there are a few apples for people to pick and make juice. In the ponds there are carp and crayfish which the children love to catch. Away from the farm is an older farmhouse where we are going to create a respite care facility.

Tickwood is a Shropshire 'hill farm' of 400 acres running down to the River Severn, of which 275 acres of woodland are designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Last year, we were fortunate to be one of the first to join the Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) Scheme, which means we have state aid to look after the environment and create access for people to come onto the farm.

The animals we have on the farm are varied. For example, 55 pedigree Hereford cows, 3 Hereford bulls, 100 Buehler sheep & Blue Spot, large black pigs, 10 llamas, 2 Icelandic horses and assorted cats and dogs. It is great to see how the school children react to the different breeds we have, and for them to see how the llamas act as shepherds for the ewes when they were lambing.

The staff we have are our extended family, for example -

- Anna is the farmer and forest school teacher
- Edward is a part time farm labourer and passionate about Tickwood
- Matilda (our daughter) is the long suffering guinea pig aged 3 and a HALF
- Tamas is Hungarian and 'hands on' farmer, carer and anything & everything
- Dave at 80+ is the cantankerous retired farmer cum gardener

Why did we decide to do this at Tickwood? Because farms need people, and modern farming cannot afford this, so to bring life to the farm you have to look elsewhere. Now we have a virtuous circle of activity, everything is used, maintenance is required and improvements on the farm made so there is better access for wheelchairs etc. All these activities add to the farms environment.

Having worked with people with learning disabilities I realised that respite in Shropshire is woeful. Out of 760 Children registered with a disability in Shropshire only 42 children (5%) get respite. It is not only the children that benefit from overnight respite but also the families, because then their other children get undivided attention for the first time. I have been involved with supported housing for over ten years and the initial idea was to provide a holiday break for adults with learning disability on the farm so that it would be a different environment for them. Then we discovered our journey into care farming and the benefits to health and self worth derived from combining activities, animals and environment that a farm can offer. A care farm can cater for anyone out of sorts with the modern world but we soon realised that we could not get started unless we focused on a particular client group. Therefore, we concentrated on children with learning disabilities, and since then our client groups have increased.

We were lucky to have a Dutch agricultural student called Mac, whose ambition was to work with horses and troubled children, and so she persuaded her college in Holland to allow her to do her final year dissertation on bringing the system of a Dutch care farm to Tickwood. Mac's greatest ability was her innocence. She believed when she called people, they should talk to her or at least phone back. So she phoned people till they did call back and then she would embarrass people into meeting us. In 3 months she and I had more meetings (44) than I had managed to arrange in 3 years! This gave me a huge exposure to those involved with disabled children.

Unfortunately, we could not just anglicise a Dutch care farm, because there is a different structure, people are less approachable, and we are far more disjointed here in the UK than in Holland.

Our original aim was to provide residential respite care at the farmhouse set in a remote rural area, some half a mile from the nearest neighbour, from where you cannot see other inhabitants or they see you. Last year I spent months putting together a RES grant application and business plan for Defra because our project falls into many of the key drivers of the West Midlands area e.g. farm diversification, rural self sufficiency, respite care, and rural job creation. It was a great disappointment when I discovered that the application did not succeed. Furthermore a planning application gathered a number of objections from our neighbours, i.e. the old NIMBY response from that we were going to house ex criminals from local prisons to training terrorists. This was a total shock and even surprised the experienced Planning Officers as nothing received was a valid objection. The irony of the situation is that you do not need planning permission to house ex offenders but you do to house children.

Our goal is to create a vibrant community of spirit, fun and learning of physical tasks on the farm combined with the environment, animals and activities. We want to produce a dynamic spiral of opportunities and happiness. Provide a broad range of experiences to children to find something that “turns their light on”, a sanctuary where children can find and be themselves, a positive focus for families with disabled children, where their contribution is valued.

Our biggest problem is time as there is not enough of it. Between our full time jobs we try to network and inspire people to come to Tickwood and use the place. Presently our main project is overnight respite in the old farmhouse, where we would like to provide five to six beds, which would add 60% to the current capacity in Shropshire i.e. 30 more children in the county would be able to have respite care. The day respite breaks down into the forest school, skills training and the farm. Eventually we want to create this haven for the children and their parents.

The forest school site was developed last summer and the sessions started in the autumn, one school is already signed up and another three start after Easter. The children span in ages from older children who have come through a ‘workshop exclusion’ scheme to pre-school age. We are doing a coppicing project with The Greenwood Centre who supervise a group of “volunteers” twice a week, and there will also be visits on a weekly basis from Severndale School to take part in horticulture projects and skills training. In addition we have someone on work experience, who is dyslexic like Edward and myself and they are working towards NVQ Level 1.

Our partners are: -

- National Children’s’ Home (NCH) - our partner for overnight respite care and we want to also develop skills training with school leavers who presently live in foster care at NCH
- The Greenwood Centre – involved in the forest school, but we also want to put on some hedge laying days
- Severndale School works across the board in developing activities and ideas
- Natural England is the guardian of the HLS and also have provided a grant to build a disabled room at the farm

There are frustrations that have to be overcome and some of these are: -

- Insurance - getting insurance is always problematical because the activities do not fit neatly into a box.

- Health and Safety can never be perfect because you are dealing with nature. There is very little guidance and risk assessments can be a barrier rather than path to an activity
- Most frustrating is the promise of people to do things during a meeting, who then backtrack when you actually ask them to follow through.
- Funding - every source has their own little quirks and it takes a lot of time and effort
- The feeling of Groundhog Day and "internal meeting" syndrome, that people are in their comfort zones, and it requires huge effort to get them out to make the necessary change

After a knock back the only way to pick yourself up is the emotion of wanting to make a difference. However, a mixture of persistence and patience will make it happen, and the immovable object does have floors.

The NCFI (UK) has to provide a number of things: -

- moral support
- practical help in respect of guidance on funding
- reassurance to potential funders and service users
- framework for insurance, health & safety and risk assessments
- matchmaking service between service users, funders and suppliers

At the beginning we seemed to be faced with an impossible circle of failure, as it was daunting dealing with all the people, bodies and actions. Where do you start? However once you make that one crucial break you soon discover there is also a circle of success, thanks to components being interlinked, before you know it, the care farm has taken on a life of its own from which you can climb to the goals.

Our focus at present is mainly funding, to cover both capital and running costs for residential respite care and supervision and transport. We need more people on the ground with relevant skills and clearances. Links are being formalised with certain partners, and local support is being sought from neighbours, parent support groups and service purchasers. We are trying to whip the spiral into a tornado of interested parties so that the 'care farming' can be sustained with continuing confidence.

So what is it all about?

I feel this quote from Severdale School teacher sums it up: – "It was lovely to see the children's confidence grow each week"

7.3 Dr Matthew Home - Willowdene Farm

The mission statement of the drug rehabilitation centre that we run from Willowdene Farm in Shropshire is "To stimulate, promote and encourage a purposeful drug free lifestyle in a working society".

Background

How did we get from being a farm to a drug rehabilitation centre? Well my parents moved to the farm in 1971, my father had been a student here at Harper Adams, and set it up as a commercial pig farm. He was also involved with camps for inner city youth, and people from Birmingham would come to stay for weekends on the farm and experience the feeling of being on a farm and in the countryside. Growing up on the farm I found it difficult to understand how individuals had never seen pigs, sheep, and cows and would want to go and touch them, and not know where milk came from.

My parents then started another rehabilitation centre in the north of the county and people from disadvantaged backgrounds would spend one day on the pig farm and

get involved with activities. In 1988 my parents ceased pig farming and registered the farm as a drug rehabilitation centre. Since then we have expanded our facilities and training, and I came back to Willowdene in 2003 to look at company re-structuring, with a view to add value to the guys that are coming through.

Our setting is non institutionalised, as our guys have previously been in prisons or care homes and been through too much institutionalisation. So we run the centre as a family environment, informal and relaxed in a rural location, so they can take ownership of that type of environment. These are the type of people I have shared my life with since I was 12 years old, and it was not threatening but an experience I would never take away. The guys who come through the programme, each and everyone we work with are unique individuals, and the things that have happened to them we probably could not cope with, they are extraordinary. We do not ask them to do any work that we would not do ourselves.

There are many different therapy models that could be used in counselling for people suffering sexual and/or physical abuse, which nearly 75% of those coming to the farm have experienced. We would not treat animals the way some of them have been treated in the past. The therapy sessions we use are one-on-one sessions for four hours every 10 days. It is an individual Gestalt therapeutic programme, with individual counselling and regular 'homework'. It is a controlled environment and there is daily intervention to help the guys.

Funding has been mentioned as a problem, but we have found another way to get money is through training. Training can bring in revenue streams through the Learning and Skills Council, and we have become an Approved Training Centre with 25 nationally recognised qualifications that the lads could obtain. Some of them have better CVs than a lot of people leaving college!

Training

We train in four key areas – forestry, engineering, skills for life and health and safety. Remember that a lot of our lads have never done a day's work and may have started on drugs at the age of 11 or 12 years, which they were introduced to by family or friends. An appalling situation! They have become trained in tree felling and arboriculture and have become professional tree surgeons out in industry, or they have achieved city and guilds in welding and assisted with land rover restoration, which they enjoy as they get a chance to drive them afterwards. Other skills are obtained in IT and health and safety which make them highly employable when they leave.

Farming Activities

This area of activity is new to our project and when some of the steering group came out to see us in September 2006 we had 8 acres of forestry land but no arable or pasture land, but despite our Bank's reservations we decided to buy land. Already we are seeing therapeutic value of the lads integrating with the animals. We have beef cattle, sheep, ducks and geese and far too many horses, and one thing we have noticed is that our lads are beginning to take ownership and responsibility of the animals. This amusing quote perhaps sums it up "I want ewe to want me", because these animals are non-judgemental and give affection that the lads have always looked for.

A particular lad we have with us who you can see in the picture with the sheep has come from an awful background, but now he has excitement in getting up in the morning as when he shakes his bucket of barley, which he mills himself, the sheep come running to him.



Unconditional affection for him, they do not want anything from him, he pets them all, he has names for them, and it gives him a purpose throughout the day. I now feel I now understand the therapeutic value of this type of care farming for our lads, for instance, the movement of a flock sheep by a group of them into a pen relies heavily on them using team work and planning skills. It is inspirational.

Agro-Forestry

Due to the skills the lads have learnt on the farm, has allowed us to take them to South America for two to three weeks to help develop agro-forestry at a site in Guyana. We work with the government over there and are hoping to set up another project over there shortly.

Resettlement

As well as the training and therapy at the farm we also deal with resettlement and have our own Resettlement officer and we work in partnerships, as we could not do it on our own. We work with Job Centre Plus, Work Assist and people in the community help us out. Our reputation is such that companies ring us up looking for our lads to be employed. This is great considering they are previous 'druggies' that people now want to employ for the first time.

Outcomes

Our retention rate is 31% above national average and our residents typically gain 20+ new qualifications. Of residents completing the programme typical statistics would be -

- 90% of started careers in land based industries
- Wages were typically over £250/week
- 90% moved to areas unconnected with their past
- 90% found private sector accommodation
- 92% were drug free following their resettlement

Valuable lessons

The Centre has not been without its problems, for instance, setting up in 1988 in the middle when we had the hard hitting aids campaign on television, meant difficult reaction of neighbours often based on prejudice and misguided information. If we were setting up again we would talk more to the parish council, we would present to them. Through determination things have changed and we have a good example of a drug rehabilitation centre, and we are now a resource for the community, who ask for help from our lads.

Problem solving

Insurance and drug users with chainsaws (!), not an easy combination, and originally we were asking a traditional care home insurance company for cover for the training. So we had to set up a different company formation to approach this issue, which has helped reduce our insurance premiums. Also by reorganising into two separate companies we have during the last three years, been able to access grants. With one company I can access money from the Learning and Skills Council through a franchise deal at Walford College, and through the rehabilitation company I have drawn down funding from the Department of Health. With staffing, it is very important

you make the right choice and they have bought into the vision of what you are doing. They need to run with you, it is no good them being there just drawing a wage.

Future Direction

We will expand provision and facilities of buildings, training, and farming and increase our capacity. I see a multi faceted approach to care which I believe that the NCFI (UK) can bring together the parts so that we can all work together and establish/develop partnerships, to ensure individuals have a value added and improved quality of life. These individuals if we give them help can live the life designed for them and move forward.

There is a huge problem in the UK but together we can make a difference!

8. DELEGATE QUESTIONS & FEEDBACK

8.1 Delegate Questions

During the final session of the day there were opportunities for the delegates to ask questions of the keynote speakers and practitioners.

Delegate Question 1 - What is the best approach to get the local community and your neighbours on your side?

- Answer openly and give them information
- Ask them into the consultation process
- Try to speak to the parish councillors early on, never present them with a *fait accompli*. You do have a right to go to the parish council, they cannot refuse to see you
- People will hate it if you just say 'This is what we are going to do' so there will be a need for consultation that is open and honest
- Try to inspire people is the secret but do not be disappointed!
- Ask for ideas
- We have two people from the college on the parish council and we try to be open and transparent as they do not like surprises. Try and bring them on to the site and let them know your long term plans

Delegate Question 2 – In terms of social accounting would the practitioners be able to tell me what social value/return they think they are giving back to the community?

- Very difficult to quantify. For instance at our forest school we have nine children coming once a week, now if they were not coming they would be excluded. So what is the cost of that, and I feel that is what we are adding. Also we have 'volunteers' who come and help twice a week which is no cost to us and saves the cost of them being locked up and supervised for those periods. As practitioners we suffer as we do not have the time to do it
- What currency would you recognise? What kind of guarantee are you aiming at? How do you cost day care centres? If someone is excluded from school what price would you put on that? These are questions we need to answer as a group so we can go forward and quantify in a manner that local authorities can understand and identify with
- A paper on this issue published in 2004 suggested that for every pound spent on rehabilitation then £3 would be saved
- In terms of the currency being pounds, shillings and pence it was demonstrated at a conference I attended last week that for a ten year period a drug addict going through our education, benefit and prison system could cost the tax payer in the region of £790,000
- At Bulmer's when we have worked out roughly the cost per year of an alcoholic or drugs addict - it would be in the region of £80,000. The potential saving of just turning around just 10% would be enormous. So how do we turn

those savings into funding that could help us with our programmes? Dave Marshall is an Accountant experienced in looking at the triple bottom line for projects within the Bulmer Foundation and may be able to throw more light on this area

- Twenty years ago working for the Environment Agency I was asked to cost the environment and I could not. Now they will tell you how much the environment is worth. Now as a potential care farmer I am being asked to cost social care which is the same kind of ballpark figure. There were three economic measures we used to look at – fiscal, environmental and social welfare, and it is now the social welfare measure that is missing.
- I am a healthcare professional and probably the only Psychiatrist here. I would like to comment that residential and substantial treatment of those suffering from drug abuse is likely to be very cost effective in health care savings later, as the 'quality adjusted life years' will cost society less. What is difficult is getting the money from government to run with something new, but it is achievable. I am presently involved in a project called 'Personality disorder initiative' in Oxford, which is a Department of Health funded initiative to assist people with complex mental health problems, and as part of that we want to tie into the 'green initiative' because the problem is not yet covered by the health services.

Delegate Question 3 - I feel the local authorities should be advising us what to say when discussing funding. In my line of business (City Farms) our Primary Care Trust has just cut our contract by 25%, our Social Services have a budget that will get a 3% cut, our Probation Service also have a budget of which 10% has to be contracted out. How on a local level can we get people to make decisions about funding, when central government are saying that everything is being cut? How do we get a conference of PCT/NHS/Social Services/Probation Services funders together?

- The NHS Alliance of which Michael Dixon is a Chair has its annual conference in November and for the first time there will be a particular session on 'The use of farming and green care as a therapeutic endeavour for the health service'. The NCFI (UK) will be trying to get more health care representation. However, the current membership must realise that they have power in bringing their services together, the facilities they can offer, and the experiences they can share i.e. a coordinated effort so that when funding and acceptance comes from above they will be ready
- Before the Monty Don series we had set up a voluntary organisation to pull the money in, to attract funds, it was not a problem. However, the Probation Service should not find it difficult to spend 10% of its budget in the voluntary sector and it should be spent on the types of provision you are offering. In West Mercia we have tried to get involved with those arrangements before anyone else. Up and down the country there should be Probation Services desperate to contract such provision so they can meet this 10% target set. If this opportunity is not taken up by the Probation Services then they will only find that regional services will 'top slice' their budgets in future. I want a provision that matches my rural need and not a provision in Birmingham. Another project we are looking at in the next six months is to help those offenders who only get short sentences and no support after, which may mean they would re - offend. So in West Mercia we will look at a system of mentors or buddying, and a lot of the people here today may be able to help that group of offenders to stop re offending.

8.2 Analysis of the Feedback Forms

Question 1 Please tell us what you found most useful or interesting at the conference today

All respondents (86) made comments to this question. There was a general positive feeling created by attendance with the most commonly used term “inspirational” made by 19% of respondents.

By far the most prominent part of the conference was the opportunity to hear practitioner presentations/case studies (28%), followed by the opportunities to network and talk with practitioners (25%), then the enthusiastically delivered research information (19%). Several people noted with appreciation the range of speakers and their experiences.

“The opportunity to network with the other delegates, and to hear about the wider picture from the speakers”

Some noted the willingness to talk about success was very refreshing, as too was the openness of all the speakers.

Several liked the question time but felt that additional time was also needed for this during the morning session.

Question 2 Is there anything else that you feel was missing?

Of the 67 respondents (78%) there were a range of issues people would have liked more information about, such as:

- Financial management and social accounting
- How to influence policy and policy makers
- More statistics, and
- Web based Frequently Asked Questions.

Several wished there had been more time, and suggested a future conference be extended to 1.5 days providing opportunities for networking in the evening.

The three areas most often commented on were:

- It would be useful to hear a testimony presentation from a previous user/client
- Group discussion time, especially in relation to the future of the network and to exchange problems and successes, and
- Practical advice on ‘how to start’, including how to address issues of insurance, risk assessments; the general request was for an information pack or guide

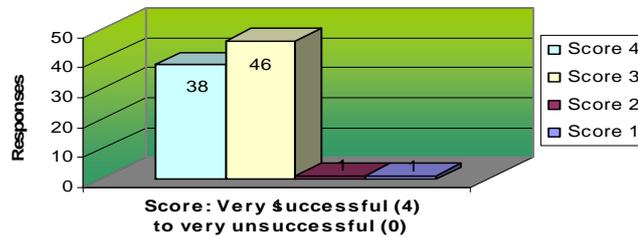
Individual comments included:

- “Care farming is positioned as substantially curative”
- “The voice of the learning disabled could have been emphasised more”
- “Information on contacts for fundraising”

On practical conference arrangements:

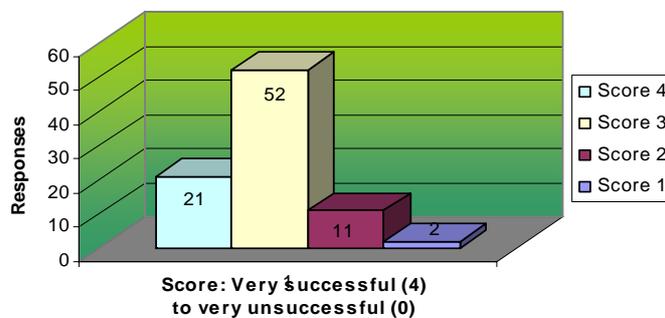
- “Simply - water to drink - openly available”

Question 3 In your opinion, how successful was the conference at providing an opportunity for practitioners to meet and share experiences?



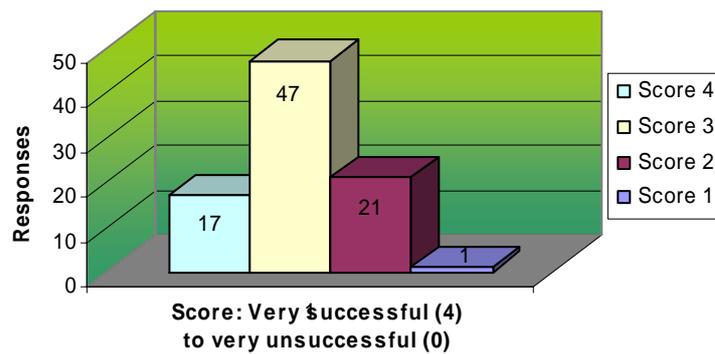
On a scale of 0 – 4 the average score was a very respectable 3.4 so the conference clearly provided a good opportunity for practitioners. Given the very positive comments under question 1 it may be that a number of people recording a score of 3 (successful) rather than 4 did so from their perspective of observations, if they regarded the term ‘practitioner’ as being synonymous with operating a care farm, of which many were not.

Question 4 How successful was the conference at promoting care farming amongst farmers, health, education and social services professions?



On a scale of 0 – 4 the average score was 3.1 so not as good in this respect as providing opportunities for networking. This response again relates to question 2 in which there were several comments about the lack of health professionals present at the conference, and also policy makers, in particular no-one from Defra.

Question 5 How successful was the conference at determining the future directions of the network?



On a scale of 0 – 4 the average score was 2.9 so not particularly successful in addressing this question. This response relates to question 2 in which there were several comments about the lack of opportunity for discussion groups to share experiences and to consider the future of the NCFI (UK). Other related comments are listed under question 6.

Question 6 Is there anything else that you feel the network should provide or support in the future?

Of the 68 respondents (79%) there were a range of comments but the main ones are best grouped under four headings:

1. Information

- 11 people stated that information packs or guides on how to start a care farm are needed, 2 wanted more information and statistics, and another 2 wanted named contacts to approach for further advice, e.g.
 “Stepping stones of where to get next stage information.’Next stop information post”
 “Information on health & safety and insurance and funding help”
- 4 people wanted more information on financial estimates/value of services provided, and several asked for alternative funding strategies and how to access funds, e.g.
 “Alternative strategies for fundraising for various client groups locally (education, health, social services, probation etc)”

2. Networking

- Requests were made from 9 people to hold more regional networking events, and asked if the NCFI (UK) would set up a web forum to both ask questions and share experiences, e.g.
 “Local networking (county-wide) needed to link providers/training/users and statutory orgs (NFU, Defra, CLA, etc) together”
 “More frequent networking sessions”
 “Organise more regional network/workshop days and trips”

3. Standards

- Accreditation and a set of standards for care farming was recognised as needing to be developed by 5 people, and another 6 considered there are training needs to be met, one also suggested the option of mentoring should be explored, e.g.

“Quality control/qualifications - some sort of legitimacy”

“Quality assurance scheme”

“A framework for standards, Health & safety etc”

“Training for farmers wishing to engage in care farming at fairly local level e.g. county” (this could link with training sessions at networking events)

4. Promotion

- Brokering was the term used by 5 people, mainly in relation to helping match providers and commissioners of services, and 2 felt the web site needed to be used to further promote care farming, e.g.

“Brokering between farms and user groups”

“Be a brokerage?”

“Brokering connections with policy makers”

A number of individual comments were also made:

- “Bigger names on the name badges so you don't have to peer so hard at peoples chests! Attendance list with approximate occupations column”
- “The term "Care Farming" needs to be re thought. It is not a useful term and there could be a better alternative”
- “Avoid going down the blame road re public sector commissioners and instead look at ways to help them in their purpose using care farms”
- “More people from the front line with experience and qualifications need to be involved in the steering committee or we are at risk of losing the reality of the situation”
- “Where can questions re NCFI (UK) be directed? Will the steering committee reply to them? A forum maybe?”
- “Can we all use the logo on the farm and on letter headings - if so are we "a member of" or "part of"”

Some points emphasised issues raised in question 2, such as:

- “Get some people who have used the services of care farms to share their experiences with us”

There were two specific offers of help, and one question about how could people get involved:

- “Develop a fundraising brokerage network. I would welcome the chance to share my fundraising experience”
- “The Bulmer Foundation would like to work with NCFI (UK), to design the training offer - in consultation with members”

9. CLOSING ADDRESSES & CONCLUSION

Richard Heathcote, Sustainable Development Manager of Bulmers highlighted the tremendous day that had been organised and in particular the emotion shown, due to the hard work demonstrated by the practitioners. On behalf of Scottish & Newcastle and Bulmers he thanked everyone for their attendance and commented on how well things had progressed in the 18 months or so since the first conference. In particular thanks were given to the other supporters of the day namely Natural England, Harper Adams University College, Gordon Gatward and the rest of the steering committee.

Gordon Gatward asked the delegates to reflect on what they had heard and seen during the day and to feedback thoughts and ideas to the steering group for the NCFI (UK). Main issues that appeared again and again during the conference were: -

- Funding
- Evidence Base e.g. social accounting and how to measure our success
- Spirit in a person is something we all want to help, so they can rediscover who they are and what their potential is in life

These things the steering group will be looking at very carefully over the coming months.

Meetings with people of influence were definitely on the horizon, and even the day after the conference a meeting had been arranged for Gordon with Sir Don Curry at Defra to talk about care farming, and then another at Clarence House to meet Prince Charles because he has expressed such an interest in the subject.

Gordon also extended thanks to the steering group, who were five or six dynamic people, with a passion for what this is about, and sharing it with others has increased the passion. In the next 12 months he expressed his wish to get care farming on the political agenda, as well as the agenda of the health and social services organisations. It is the wish for the National Care Farm Network to be run by its members as it is about people helping each other, encouraging each other. Delegates were asked to consider hosting network days on their own care farm to assist those who are thinking of setting one up, and of attracting the media so that the wider public get to know how effective this means of care could be.

In conclusion it is generally accepted that in the period since the first conference that it would not be envisaged that care farms could now be prescribed for, by a GP as a treatment, whether that be on a city farm or out in the rural community. It was a vision the steering group had and the second conference was a way of conveying that vision to others so that they can make their projects viable in their own communities.

As one farmer stated in the research 'It is nice to see farming putting a smile on someone's face'

APPENDICES



APPENDIX 1

NCFI (UK) Objectives

To promote Care Farming amongst farmers, healthcare providers and social service providers

To provide opportunities for practitioners to meet	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Encourage, and provide, a range of networking opportunities for practitioners and purchasers of services• Undertake mapping (or scoping) exercise to locate existing initiatives• Develop a database of initiatives for signposting between providers, and for purchasers• Maintain database of interested parties• Publish newsletters (by email and via web)• Adopt a protocol to ensure specific practitioner information is shared by agreed permission• Network information regularly to interested parties through email (by post if necessary)• Develop a new website• Establish a bursary fund to subsidise visits by farmers considering care farming with established practitioners• Arrange a national event
To inform the network, practitioners and providers of new developments and to share good practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make available existing information and guidance, and determine further appropriate guidance requirements• Develop signposting website on which to publish information and guidance• Develop a telephone helpline service• Collate and disseminate H&S and other legal obligations advice• Collect and disseminate good practice information, in particular a bank of case studies• Identify and publicise information on potential sources of funding• Record the barriers/obstacles preventing (or hindering) providers and purchasers working together• Identify a scoping study brief to explore addressing (some of) the above barriers through accreditation and training• Develop guidance on good working practices
To Collect and present evidence of the benefits of care farming - physical health, mental health and well-being, social and economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Collect and present evidence of the physical, mental, social and economic benefits of care farming, and commission research• Document research evidence, and case studies, from the UK• Liaise with the Farming for Health Network and COST Action 866 Green Care in Agriculture to gather (and contribute to) European wide research evidence• Support, and where possible commission, new research
To influence agricultural, health and social care policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Influence the development of enabling policies to create an environment in which care farming can flourish• Develop formal representational links with key Government Departments – primarily Defra, DoH, and HO - in London, and liaise with counterparts in Edinburgh, Cardiff and Belfast.• Publish an introductory leaflet (explaining the concept and encouraging providers to supply their details)• Work with agencies and representational bodies with an interest in care farming, to identify planning and other legislative barriers and work to address them collectively• Maintain and develop links with major funding bodies

Assess the options for the medium term structure, and funding, for the network

- Through consultation with providers and purchasers, to record and analyse network infrastructure options
 - Specific consideration to be given to the needs of members of the network in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales
 - Prepare costed options for the preferred model(s), including staffing (paid and voluntary) and other resources
 - Fundraise for the above preferred option(s)
-

APPENDIX 2

Speaker Biographies:

Dr Stuart Burgess

Stuart Burgess chairs the Commission for Rural Communities having been Chairman of the Countryside Agency, and the Government's Rural Advocate since 2004. For 15 years he was a regional, national and international Church leader in the Methodist Church, including President of the Methodist Church of Great Britain in the millennium year. He has represented the Church at national level with government and ecumenical partners.

As Chairman and Rural Advocate, Dr Stuart Burgess leads the Commission for Rural Communities in its efforts to persuade Government to take account of the particular characteristics of rural areas (such as levels of disadvantage, the sparse population, the lack of local services, distance from the main centres of population, limited public transport, the absence of large scale businesses etc.) when making and implementing policies.

He is a member of the ethics committee for the Department of Work and Pensions, the BMA Patient Liaison Group, and of the University Courts of Nottingham and Hull. He has been involved in rural and social regeneration in the East Riding and North Yorkshire and is co-author of a study booklet on the countryside entitled "Presence".

Cancellation of debt for poor counties is important to him and to this end he has worked with the Presidents of Zambia and Malawi, the IMF, the World Bank and the Treasury. He has also worked with the Metropolitan Commissioner of Police, Sir John Stevens, arranging conferences around the theme "safer neighbourhoods" in the London Boroughs.

Rachel Hine

Rachel Hine is the senior research officer for the Centre for Environment and Society in the Department of Biological Sciences at the University of Essex. Research, training skills and expertise include Green Exercise, community development, farming and food systems, Care Farming, sustainable agriculture, deliberative and participatory methods for assessments, Participatory Appraisal training and a wide range of questionnaire and fieldwork design. Rachel is on the Management Committee for EU COST Action 866 Green Care in Agriculture and also a member of the steering group for The National Care Farming Initiative (UK).

Recent publication titles range from 'Green Exercise: The Benefits to Health of Activities in Green Places', 'A countryside for health and well-being', 'Survey and analysis of labour on organic farms in the UK and Republic of Ireland', 'Reducing food poverty by increasing agricultural sustainability in developing countries' and 'A Community and Social Needs Survey of Essex'. Rachel has designed and facilitated over 30 Community Assessments and Participatory Appraisals nationwide in a variety of different contexts including health needs assessments, countryside management, Market Town Initiatives, local authority planning and community development.

David Chantler

David Chantler has been Chief Officer of the West Mercia Probation Area since it was established in April 2001. Before that he was Chief Probation Officer in South West

London, including 18 months on secondment to the Home Office advising on governance structures for the probation service.

Earlier in his career David was a probation officer at HMP Grendon, which specialises in working with inmates with psychiatric disorders through the medium of therapeutic community. In moving to Shropshire he became involved in the local and sustainable food agenda, as a member of Slow Food and as a Director of the Ludlow Food Festival, and developed an interest in how the rural setting might lend itself to therapeutic possibilities. Completely out of the blue he was contacted by the BBC who were interested in making a television series, exploring just these themes, featuring author and TV gardener, Monty Don. Together they developed the "Growing out of Crime" programme aimed at prolific offenders, which was televised last December as "Monty Don: Growing out of Trouble."

David has, at various times, been a local councillor, member of a health authority and active in the voluntary sector, particularly in relation to homelessness, and his other great interest is in how the different sectors can work together, adding value rather than destroying it through following only their own narrow targets.

David lives in South Shropshire, on Clee Hill, and his own contribution to the rural economy is as a bee keeper.

Professor Wynne Jones

Wynne Jones came to Harper Adams University College in 1988 as Vice-Principal and Director of Research before taking up the post of Principal and Chief Executive in July 1996. The College employs around 400 people with a turnover of £17 million.

Professor Jones is on the Board of Trustees and Council of Lantra (the land based Sector Skills Council) and specifically chairs the Research Development and Planning Advisory Group charged with skills foresight and workforce development plans in the land based sector. He is also a member of the BASIS Board and Chairman of the BASIS Professional Matters Committee. He is a Nuffield Scholar and past Chairman of the Nuffield Farming Scholarships Trust. He is a Fellow of the Royal Agricultural Societies; a Fellow of the Institute of Agricultural Engineering; sits on the Council of the Royal Agricultural Society of England (RASE); and was conferred with the RASE National Agricultural Award in 2005 for services to Agriculture with particular emphasis on Agricultural Education. In 2006 he was awarded an Honorary Doctor of Science from Cranfield University.

He is Farm Director for the Harper Adams University College Farms which operates a range of enterprises, both livestock and arable, and which is in a designated Nitrate Vulnerable Zone.

His specific interests are agricultural education policies and approaches to sustainable food, farming and rural strategies for the UK.

Dr Michael Dixon OBE

Michael Dixon has been a full time GP in Cullompton for 21 years and Chair of NHS Alliance since 1998.

Nationally he is a member of the National Leadership Network for Health & Social Care (Department of Health) and of the Medical Leaders Professional Council. Locally, he is commissioning lead for Mid Devon Primary Care Trust having co-founded the Mid Devon Commissioning Group that preceded it in 1993.

He was co-author of the NHS Alliance documents: - "Restoring the Vision" (1997); "Implementing the Vision" (2000); "Vision in Practice" (2002); "Engaging GPs in the New NHS" (2003) and "Making a Difference" (2004). His other publications include:-

The Locality Commissioning Handbook (Radcliffe Press 1997)

The Human Effect (Radcliffe Press 2000)

A Practical Guide to Primary Care Groups and Trusts (Radcliffe Press 2000)

Other appointments include:- Senior Associate of the King's Fund (London), Honorary Senior Fellow in Public Policy (HSMC, Birmingham University), Honorary Senior Clinical Lecturer at the Peninsula Medical School, Trustee of the Prince of Wales's Foundation for Integrated Health and Member of Complementary and Alternative Medicine Research Policy Committee.

He is a writer, researcher and regular speaker on primary care, health policy, complementary medicine and the therapeutic relationship.

His mission is the NHS and, in particular, to champion frontline professionals, managers and patients against inertia, inflexibility and vested interest in the quest for better health and services

The Houghton Project

Begun in October 2003, the Houghton Project was inspired by the work that project leader Tim James-Moore undertook in Bristol with a scheme of city farms. Based within a 200-acre working farm, it developed from an initiative to provide a unique and modern service to benefit and enrich the lives of many people who are often referred to as the fringe groups in society. These include people with physical and learning disabilities, the unemployed and people being reintroduced to living in society under the New Deal Initiative. Working alongside other farms and farm staff, volunteers, members of the public, local community shops, farmers markets and conservation agencies, the project aims to provide a wide-ranging opportunity of community networks. The Houghton Project also allows groups and societies to visit and use the farm facilities in an attempt to provide better understanding of, and empathy with, disabled people's needs.

The vocational courses offered include horticulture, conservation, animal care and agricultural animals. Accompanying these courses, the following support facilities are available:

- Sheltered work placements
- Individual study support
- Counselling
- Specialist staff experienced in all aspects of training provision

At the farm, the focus is placed on enabling people to realise their strengths, therefore encouraging them to reclaim some personal power. The therapeutic working environment also helps the students to develop personal motivation, understand the basic principles of industrial practice through work involvement, and gain an understanding of health, safety and appropriate behaviour in a variety of work and social contexts.

Houghton Farm has transformed itself with a new meeting room/kitchen; an office dedicated to the project; a dairy room is nearing completion; a minibus; many constructed buildings for the animals and an organic vegetable garden.

Mr Tim James-Moore

Tim's first experience of farming was on the family farm in Herefordshire. After college he travelled and later qualified as a teacher and training assessor and has been involved in vocational training for seventeen years. He started his teaching career in Kenya, teaching agriculture in a secondary school. Since then he has taught Organic Gardening and Horticulture at the City of Bristol College. For ten years he worked on a city farm in Bristol which provided training for people with learning disabilities and mental health issues, in Animal Care, Horticulture and Agriculture. Trainees fully participated in the production and retail of meat, eggs, milk and cheese, and worked towards a vocational qualification.

This experience focused his approach on the importance of inclusive training for service users, and he is committed to providing training that is centred around specific learning needs.

Tickwood Care Farm

The aim of the Care Farm at Tickwood is to create a haven for Children with learning difficulties - where they can have fun, learn skills, grow their self-esteem and achieve their potential. We wish the farm to be part of their lives and to give respite to them and their families by providing registered overnight accommodation (together with NCH). Existing daytime activities include taking part in the everyday life of the farm - as well as the forest school, the walled kitchen garden and with the possibility of "outward bound" type activities with Severndale School. Although the activities are targeted at children, we have also had "volunteers" helping to prepare the forest school site and others are currently involved in a coppicing project.

Funding at all levels, both capital and running costs (e.g. transport costs), has and still is a battle. The residential respite project has been the biggest disappointment with Nimbyism, battling with funding and the eternal circle of no commitment (e.g. funders and care providers want committed users and users want something tangible on the ground that is up and running before they commit).

At the present time, it is still too easy to only pay lip-service to the Care Farm concept without having to follow it up with actions. We feel a lack of leverage to press the case forward to produce actions rather than words. We would all be greatly helped, in our dealings with funding, regulatory issues (such as health and safety, risk assessments and insurance) and understanding of the care farm concept by purchasers by a framework of "best practice" and endorsements of its benefits by recognisable bodies would be helped considerably.

Mr & Mrs Edward and Anna Dugdale

Anna and Edward Dugdale have come to the Care Farm at Tickwood from different directions.

Anna is a dual qualified lawyer, both in England and Sweden and was working as a tax lawyer in London until she decided that farming was her passion. She went to Tickwood and took over the reins of the farm (which was mainly sheep at the time) and established a herd of Hereford cattle. In 2004 the herd produced the junior female Champion at the National Hereford Show and a class winner at the Royal Show. She has succeeded in getting the whole farm into one of the country's first Higher Level environmental Scheme. Anna is currently training to become a forest school leader and a life-coach, to enhance the Care Farm offerings at Tickwood.

Edward qualified as a civil engineer in Australia, where he also worked on properties as a Jackeroo. He worked in London for many years and when he left for Tickwood Edward was working as a director for a quoted property investment company, which he co-founded 10 years earlier. He has since established three organisations providing housing for adults with learning difficulty, care villages for the elderly and affordable housing for both young and old. He spent weeks last year putting together the RES grant application, to the detriment of his other commitments and was left to feel like a premiership manager when the grant application was refused - "I'm gutted".

Willowdene Farm

Willowdene Farm is a residential drug rehabilitation and training centre situated in the heart of rural Shropshire, in 120 acres of mixed wood, pasture and arable land. In 1988 John and Jenny Home registered Willowdene as a drug rehabilitation centre, the unit is now run by the Home Family and has offered support to over 350 men from all over the United Kingdom.

The majority of ex-substance misusers at Willowdene have often tried several rehabilitation programmes but failed to transform their way of life. Willowdene uses the combination of an individual therapeutic programme and a comprehensive range of skills based training to fully rehabilitate residents back into a working society.

Willowdene continues to develop and evolve into a dynamic centre, offering over 25 nationally recognised qualifications, delivered on-site during the nine month programme. Willowdene is rated as one of the leading providers in the UK with a retention rate 31% greater than the national average.

Working with the land, through woodland management, timber conversion, horticulture and animal husbandry enables residents to experience new ways of thinking and working, enabling an emotional connection rarely encountered before.

With the correct environment and support, each and every person has the ability to lead the life they were designed for and seeing individuals transform their lives must be the most rewarding career anyone could hope for.

Additional information can be found at www.willowdenefarm.org.uk or www.fixofyourlife.com

Dr Matthew Home EngD, BEng, AMIAgrE

Matt was born at Willowdene in 1976 where his parents ran a commercial pig farm, and opened their home up to deprived inner city children in the holidays and weekends for a glimpse of country life as part of the local church work, which in 1988 developed into a registered drug rehabilitation centre where he grew up in an extended family setting.

Matt trained as an Agricultural Engineer and finished studying at Cranfield University-Silsoe where he completed his Engineering Doctorate in 2003 (whilst being a researcher at the Silsoe Research Institute, in Bedfordshire). He investigated the alternatives to chemical weed control for inter-row and intra-row weeds and developed a working prototype machine with significant economical and ecological savings. His work is being continued and a mechanical weed control machine is due to be produced later this year.

After studying Matt returned to Willowdene Farm, with the remit of re-structuring the unit and offering more opportunities for residents at the farm. As one of the Directors he has transformed the operation by expanding the training and farming activities, to ensure residents on the programme are exposed to a range of training and work opportunities.

Matt takes the lead in Training and Education as well as the Farming activities. The training and farming side of the enterprise has been significantly expanded during the last three years and now has a franchise partnership with Walford and North Shropshire College, and Willowdene is registered with several national awarding bodies.

For the past four years Matt has been a UK machinery judge for the Rural Agricultural Society of England (RASE) as well as judging at the Royal Welsh. He is also one of the Directors for the Institution of Agricultural Engineers.

APPENDIX 4**DELEGATE LIST**

Last Name	First Name	Organisation	Town/City	County
Adeney	Mark	Hope Farm Partnership	SWAFFHAM	Norfolk
Aker	R	Soil Association	BRISTOL	
Aldridge	B	Growing Well	Kendal	Cumbria
Ali Khan	Shirley	Bulmer Foundation	Hereford	Herefordshire
Alm	Laura	Gilead Foundations	OKEHAMPTON	Devon
Andrews	Nick	Harper Adams University College		
Atherton	John	Calderstones NHS Trust	WHALLEY	
Atkinson	S	G W Atkinson & Son	Loughborough	Leicestershire
Bailey	Ali	Hill Crest Care	CHIPPING NORTON	Oxfordshire
Baker	David	BODS		
Barlow	Robert	Worcester Chaplaincy for Agriculture and Rural Life	WORCESTER	Worcestershire
Barnes	Phil	Burnley Community Farm	BURNLEY	Lancs
Beale	H	Herefordshire Council	HEREFORD	Herefordshire
Benham	J	Primrose Organic Centre	BRECON	Powys
Best	Pandora	Rising Sun Stables C/o West Wilson Farm	RACKENFORD	Devon
Best	Eric	West Wilson Farm	Rackenford	Devon
Bethell	J	Horse Care	IPSWICH	Suffolk
Birchall	A D	Cornwall County Council	Truro	Cornwall
Bowden	R	Watershed RDA	CIRENCESTER	Herefordshire
Branston	C	Bourton Hill Farm	CHELTENHAM	Gloucestershire
Brook	Elaine	Gaia Partnership	HEREFORD	Herefordshire
Brown	Lorraine	Amelia Methodist Trust Farm	BARRY	Glamorgan
Bruce	Joanna	Stoneleigh	Hereford	Herefordshire
Buckland	Matt	Harper Adams University College		
Bullard	R		SHREWSBURY	Shropshire
Bulmer	E	Court of Noke Farm Partnership	PEMBRIDGE	
Burgess	Stuart	Commission for Rural Communities		
Cannon	Eleanor	Scottish and Newcastle Plc	Edinburgh	
Chantler	David	West Mercia Probation Service	Kidderminster	West Midlands
Chittem	Bev	Hampton Hayes Farm		Shropshire
Clothier	Stephen	Autism Solutions	Langport	Somerset
Cole	C W	Berrow House	LEDBURY	Herefordshire
Cormie	Alistair	The Bulmer Foundation	Hereford	Herefordshire
Cottrell	Mike	Commonwork Organic Farms Ltd.	Edenbridge	Kent
Court	B	Riskin Mill Cottage	HORSLEY	Glos
Cresswell	Caryl	Enterprise Development Associates	CWMBRAN	
Cummings	E	Adult & Community Services	SAXMUNDHAM	Suffolk
Davies	E D	Glevum Farm Trust	Eldersfield	Gloucestershire
Davoll	David	Bods	Hereford	Herefordshire
Dayman	J	Wide Horizons		
Dixon	Michael	College Surgery	Cullompton	Devon
Dobma	D	Waveney Community Forum	BECCLES	Suffolk
Dover	Jon	The Bulmer Foundation	Hereford	Herefordshire
Downing	Ruth	Rural Pictures	Ashbourne	Derbyshire
Downing	Jane		NORTH WALSHAM	
Dryden	Paul	Prior's Court School	THATCHAM	Berkshire
Dryerre	Wendy	Scottish & Newcastle Plc		
Duffy	Niamh	Harper Adams University College		
Dugdale	Edward	Tickwood		Shropshire
Edwards Sheath	R	Burnley Community Farm	BURNLEY	Lancashire

Eggs	Linda	Cultivations	BOGNOR REGIS	West Sussex
Egginton-Metters	Ian	Federation of City Farms & Community Gardens	Frome	Somerset
Ely	C	Princess Christians Farm	TONBRIDGE	Kent
Emmett	N	Whitehouse Farm	KINGS LYNN	Norfolk
Evans	Julia	Longlands		Worcestershire
Evans	Adam	BODS		
Farrer-Higham	J	Michelland Farm	KENDALL	Cumbria
Garner	Rob	The Bulmer Foundation	Hereford	Herefordshire
Gatward	Gordon	Arthur Rank Centre		Warwickshire
Gaunt	G	Carlshead Farm Ltd	WETHERBY SUTTON	W Yorks
Gilmour	J	Wide Horizons	COLDFIELD	West Midlands
Gordon	Pat	Holme Lacy College (Pound Farms Organics)	HEREFORD	Herefordshire
Griffin	M	Farms for Families	ABBEYDALE	Gloucestershire
Griffiths	Philippa	Harper Adams University College		
Guy	L	Bucks County Council	MILTON KEYNES	
Haigh	Rex	Thames Valley AX13 2 Institute	MORTIMER	Berkshire
Hainsworth	B	Farming and Countryside Education	OSWESTRY	Shropshire
Hale	Jeremy	Somerset County Council	GLASTONBURY	Somerset
Hands	I	Warriner School Farm		Oxfordshire
Harris	D	Hampton Hayes Farm	SHREWSBURY	Shropshire
Hart	Stephen	Natural England	WORCESTER	
Heathcote	Richard	Scottish & Newcastle Plc		
Hegarty	J R	Blore Heath Farm	Market Drayton	Shropshire
Hewitt	Clive	Farms for Families	WELLINGTON	Somerset
Hill	Russell	Calderstones NHS Trust	WHALLEY	
Hill	E	Gamelea Countryside Training Trust	Chesterfield	Derbyshire
Hine	Rachel	University Of Essex	Wivenhoe Park	Essex
Hirons	J	Warriner School Farm	BANBURY	Orkney
Hobson	R	East Clayton Trust		West Sussex
Home	Matthew	Willowdene Farm	Nr Bridgnorth	Shropshire
Hopkins	Sophie	Fordhall Community Land Initiative	Market Drayton	Shropshire
Hosking	Roger	Highfields Happy Hens	Etwall	Derbyshire
Hounslow	Petrina	Calderstones NHS Trust	WHALLEY	
Hudson	H	Lambourne End Centre		Essex
Hughes	Karen	Harper Adams University College	Newport	Shropshire
Ineson	K	Agricultural Chaplain & FCN	Minshull Vernon	Cheshire
Inges	Roger	BODS		
James-Moore	Tim	The Houghton Project	Bodenham	Herefordshire
		DEFRA, Sustainable Farming and Food Delivery Team	LONDON	
Jeavons	Mary			
Jobst	Kim	The Diagnostic Clinic	Burghill	Herefordshire
Joint	Adrian	NFU Shropshire		
Jones	E	EDA	CWMBRAN	
Jones	Wynne	Harper Adams University College		
Kenyon	Alan	Calderstones NHS Trust	WHALLEY	
King	Alastair	Bulmers		
Knott	Hilary	Cultivations	BOGNOR REGIS	West Sussex
Lecorney	John	Heeley City Farm	SHEFFIELD	South Yorkshire
Limbrick	I	Down To Earth Community Farm	SOUTHAMPTON	Hampshire
Lindley-Blunt	Vanessa	Garden Venues	Llangovan	Monmouthshire
Lucas	Rachel	East Riding of Yorkshire Council	Pocklington	East Yorkshire
Lucas	S C	Oak Farm, Shropshire County Council	BRIDGNORTH	Shropshire
Marshall	Dave	The Bulmer Foundation	Hereford	Herefordshire
McLean	J	The Royal Bank of Scotland	EDINBURGH	
Measures	Mark	The Bulmer Foundation		

Mellor	P	Millenium Farm Trust	BURY-ST-EDMUNDS	Suffolk
Moore	H	NPTC	WARWICKSHIRE	
Morgan	S	B & S A Morgan	CRAVEN ARMS	Shropshire
Morris	Carol	Calderstones NHS Trust	WHALLEY	
Murphy	Annie	Holme Lacy College	HEREFORD	Herefordshire
Norton	Peter	The Bulmer Foundation	Hereford	Herefordshire
Oakes	Susan	Worcestershire Rural Hub		
Orton	Gaynor	Harper Adams University College	Newport	Shropshire
Otter	Lydia	Pennyhooks Project	Swindon	Wiltshire
Over	R	Prior's Court School	THATCHAM	
Parsons	Stephen	Harper Adams University College		
Pearsons	Alan	Natural England	PETERBOROUGH	Cambridgeshire
Pedder	Jon	Princess Christian Farm	Tonbridge	Kent
Pinic	N	Richmond Fellowship	LONDON	
Price	Ian	Triodos Bank	Bristol	Somerset
Puzey	R	LEAF		Warwickshire
Rigden	H	NATURAL ENGLAND		Cheshire
Rogers	R	Glasshouse College	STOURBRIDGE	West Midlands
Salmon	T	Newham City Farm	London	
Salmon	M	Newham City Farm	LONDON	
Samuel	Ian	Gilead Foundations Charity Ltd.	Okehampton	Devon
Samuel	Bronwen	Gilead Foundations Charity Ltd.	Okehampton	Devon
Scott	Sue	Freelance Journalist		
Sercombe	G	Gaston Farm	Arundel	West Sussex
Sercombe	D	Gaston Farm	ARUNDEL	West Sussex
Sharp	Tony	Lambourne End Centre		Essex
Shelton	Gavin	Sector Three Consulting	DURHAM CITY	Durham
Sklan	Tessa	BODS		
Slaughter	J	Burnley Community Farm	BURNLEY	
Spooner	M	Scottish & Newcastle Berkshire Brewery	READING	Berkshire
Spurgeon	T	Thrive	Reading	Berkshire
Stacey	Pam	Glasshouse College		
Stacy-Marks	John	Amelia Methodist Trust Farm	BARRY	Glamorgan
Stringer	Trevor	Community Country Connections	CWMBRAN	
Thomas	C	Rural Skills Dept, Hartpury College	HARTPURY	Glos
Thompson	E G	Herefordshire Council	HEREFORD CHIPPING NORTON	Herefordshire
Timmins	Sadie	Hill Crest Care	NORTON	Oxfordshire
Toulson	S A	Oak Farm, Shropshire County Council	BRIDGNORTH	Shropshire
Voaden	Kay	Autism Solutions	LANGPORT	Somerset
Wagstaff	Neil	NFU Mutual		
Wareham	D	Pershore Group Of Colleges	Leominster	Herefordshire
Whitehouse	Michael	Caring for God's Acre	Bishops Castle	Shropshire
Wilcox	Debbie	Harper Adams University College	Newport	Shropshire
Wilson	Matt	The Roaches Independent School	STOKE-ON-TRENT	Staffordshire
Wilson	N	Top Barn Training		Worcestershire
Winfield	Bob	Elm Farm Research Centre		Berkshire
Wood	H	Oathall Community College Farm	HAYWARDS HEATH	West Sussex
Yaxley	D	Hope Farm Partnership	SWAFFHAM	Norfolk
Young	S	Top Barn Training	WORCESTER	Worcestershire

APPENDIX 5

LIST OF EXHIBITORS

Amelia Trust
Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens (FCFCG)
Fordhall Farm
Gaia Partnership Cultivations
Gamelea Countryside Training Trust
Gilead Foundations Charity Ltd
Growing Well Project
Herefordshire BODS
Highfields Happy Hens
Houghton Project
LEAF
National Farmers Union (NFU)
NFU Mutual Insurance
Oathall Trust
Pennyhooks Project
Princess Christian's Farm
Soil Association
Top Barn
Willowdene