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National Care Farming Initiative (UK)

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Would you like to know more about Care Farming?

Please contact:

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Network Coordinator

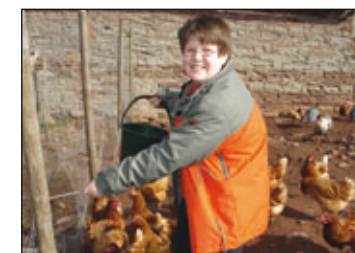
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Growing Peoples' Potential
combining care of the land with care of people

What is Care Farming?

- Care farming combines care of the land with care of people
- Care farming uses commercial farms, woodlands and market gardens as a base for promoting mental and physical health through normal farming activity
- Care farming is a partnership between farmers, participants and health and social care agencies
- Care farming seeks to develop people's possibilities and potential rather than focus upon their limitations.

Many participants on care farms experience improvements to their physical, mental and spiritual health and well-being. Participants connect with a healthy daily structure and meaningful work in a natural environment – gaining social, educational and training benefits.

Care farming is good for rural communities and economies as it enhances the viability of farms, broadens farm business and increases the services derived from the countryside. Farmers receive a deep sense of satisfaction through helping people improve their lives through farming - and having guests on the farm also addresses issues of rural isolation.

Care Farming places a high value on the knowledge and skills of farmers and seeks to help rural communities become more socially, economically and environmentally sustainable.

The farming environment can be used to provide significant benefits for a wide range of people including:

- those with mental health issues and depression
- those with learning difficulties
- people with a drug/alcohol history
- disaffected youth
- people with work-related stress

Care farms offer a wide variety of services as part of the daily running of the farm. This depends on the motivations of the farmer and the level of independence of the participants – some will be able to work on their own whilst others will need much more support. Some care farms cater for small numbers of participants and others are able to cater for larger groups. Care farms can offer day-care type provision right through to full residential programmes. Consequently,



some care farmers have adapted the farm, buildings and environment markedly to develop care farming whereas other farmers have made much smaller changes.

How can the NCFI help?

Care farming is still in its early stages of development in the UK, although numbers of farms are growing. Farmers that have been offering on-farm health, education and welfare services for people in need have often felt isolated in the absence of a national network.

The NCFI seeks to offer providers the benefits of collaborative action:

- awareness raising and mutual support
- marketing through a dedicated national website
- insurance, health and safety and other advice
- networking events and opportunities to share best practice
- advocacy and government policy development
- training opportunities

The NCFI also aims to provide a portal for commissioners of care to contact care farming practitioners, allowing them to deliver quality care in an innovative and cost-effective manner. The NCFI is also currently active in drawing together and sharing existing and on-going research into care farming, building the academic evidence base. The purpose behind this is to expand public sector understanding of the importance of care farming at the highest level and consequently drive the development of supportive national and regional government policy.

Membership is currently free of charge.

Who is Membership For?

- Farmers currently care farming, looking to share practice and benefit from the support of a network
- Farmers considering care farming
- Commissioners of health and social care – e.g. probation, NHS Trusts, doctors, police
- Policy makers – at national, regional and local level
- Charities that focus on provision for groups in need
- People wishing to be kept updated of the development of care farming

ENQUIRY FORM

Title.....

First Name

Surname

Name of Organisation (if appropriate)

Type of Organisation (farm, care commissioners, policy body etc)
.....

Address

.....

County

Postcode

Tel

Fax.....

Email.....

Website.....