



FARMS FOR CITY CHILDREN



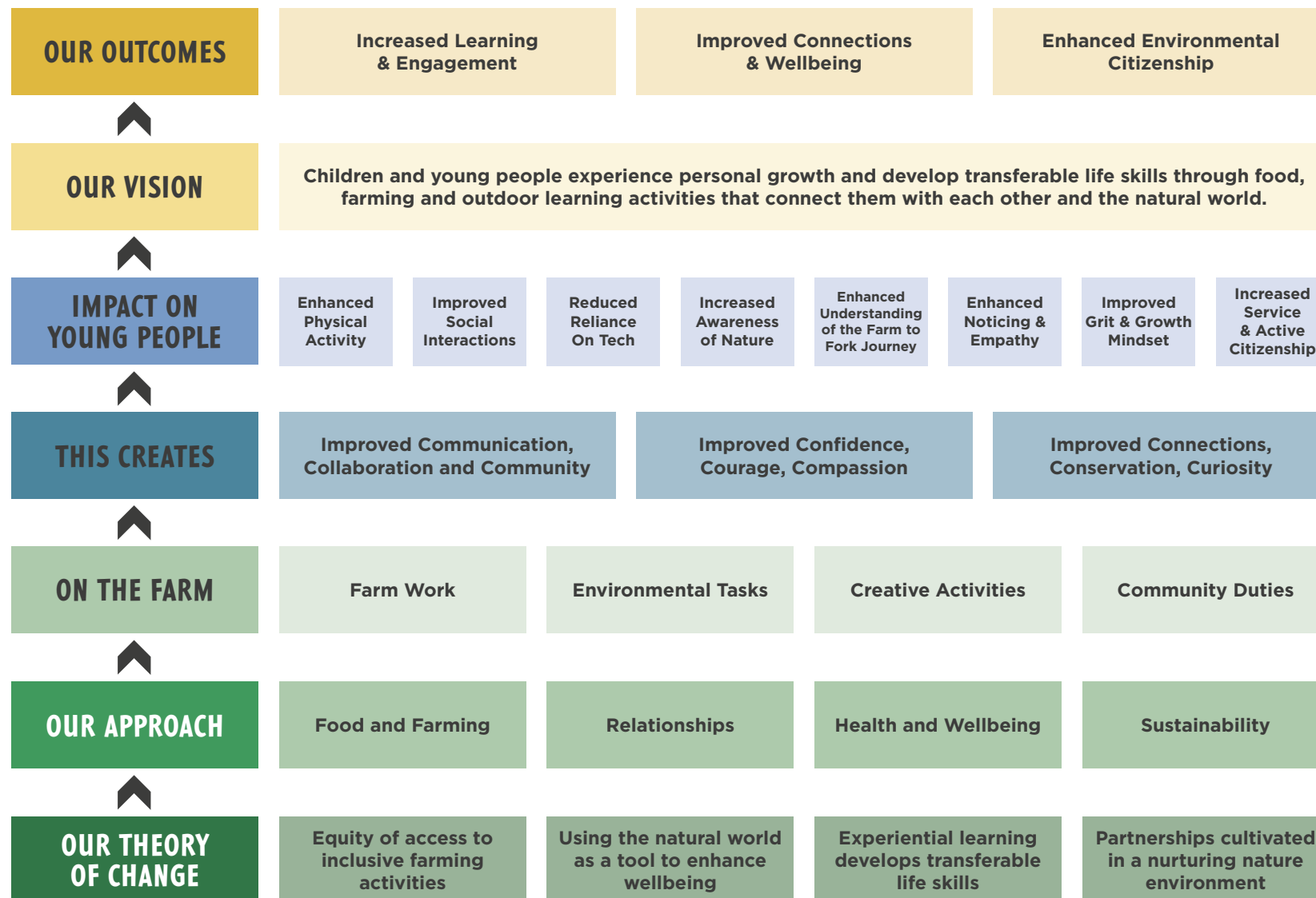
IMPACT REPORT 2022-23

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THEORY OF CHANGE



FROM THE CEO

WELCOME

Farms for City Children exists to remove the barriers that prevent children and young people having meaningful access to the natural world. Through our food, farming, and nature-connected wellbeing offer, we strive to empower the next generation to experience the physical and mental health benefits of being in the countryside, and to see themselves as the custodians of our landscape for generations to come.

During an immersive five-day residential stay on one of our stunning heritage farms in Devon, Gloucestershire, and Pembrokeshire, children and young people participate in seasonal farming tasks alongside experienced farm teams and partner Farmers.

We want children and young people to feel a profound connection to nature, a sense of their own social and moral responsibility to be stewards of our planet, and an emerging feeling of agency in visualising a future for themselves that involves remaining in contact with the countryside and nature beyond their visit. This includes pursuing education opportunities and careers in the food, environmental, or agricultural sector.

Feedback tells us that the week stimulates bonds between the young people and the accompanying adults that continues in the classroom upon return to school. Others report significant changes to behaviour, emotional reactions and levels of confidence and engagement. Teachers tell us that children are more curious, courageous, and compassionate because of the week on the farm, and that these character developments permeate the school and family setting when children return home.



2022-23 was a great year for Farms for City Children. Implementing our new strategy to be operational for 40 weeks at each farm has seen a significant increase in our beneficiary numbers with children visiting from all across England and Wales. In total, 93 schools visited one of our farms in the 2022/23 academic year. They came from 13 English and from 4 Welsh counties and 17 London boroughs. We delivered 96 week-long primary and secondary school residentials, and six one-day visits for learners in the Virtual School system. 57 of the schools were loyal returning schools, and we were delighted to add 36 new schools to the charity last year which strengthens our resilience in building our client base to meet the needs of our expanding strategy. The charity enjoyed visits from a range of community organisations serving diverse groups, some of which included refugee support networks, military families, young carers, and children at risk of county lines crime.

70% of our young beneficiaries came from major urban areas of extreme deprivation. In fact, over a third of all visits to the charity last year were made by schools in the top 10% most deprived neighbourhoods in England and Wales; a testament to our commitment to ensure that the children who need our offer the most receive our support through financial subsidy and fundraising collaboration. We are determined to keep fighting for this equity of access to obliterate the poverty of experience that is currently defining childhood for many millions of children living in the UK.

Quite simply, we will continue to “GROW children” on our farms, and we are delighted to share with you a reflection of our activities in the last year.

Donna Edmonds

Donna Edmonds, CEO





FROM THE TRUSTEES

WELCOME

Farms for City Children is a vibrant charity that, since our foundation in 1976, has been delivering immersive learning and well-being experiences to children and young people from cities and underserved communities through the opportunity of working together on our farms in the heart of the British countryside.



This has been a tremendous year of growth and re-awakening for Farms for City Children. With the challenges of national lockdowns now firmly behind us, we have opened our doors to more beneficiaries than ever before, welcoming 3288 children from 93 schools and over 600 supervising teachers and youth leaders. We have also expanded our offering to reach new groups of young people, all of whom, without exception, have benefitted from the therapeutic value of our offer.

We are immensely proud of the fantastic team of the staff and volunteers committed to creating a week of “muck and magic” for every person - children, young people, teachers, and group leaders alike - who visit one of our three heritage farms in the heart of the countryside: Nethercott House in Iddesleigh, mid-Devon; Wick Court in Gloucestershire; and Lower Treginnis in St David’s, Pembrokeshire, Wales.

Working alongside our dedicated partner farmers, these amazing teams make the charity what it is today - an inspiring charity dedicated to realising our vision of a world where all young people benefit from being connected to food, farming, and the natural environment - where access to the countryside is accepted as a right, and not a privilege.

Looking forward to 2024, we are developing our strategic business plan, in partnership with our staff, trustees, beneficiaries, and external stakeholders, to determine the direction of the charity for the upcoming years and beyond.

The future is bright for all at Farms for City Children and for the wonderful community that we serve.

Rachel Gault, Chair of Trustees

**“THE CHILDREN WERE ABLE TO EXPLAIN
THE IMPORTANCE OF SUSTAINABILITY
WHILST DEVELOPING AN AWARENESS OF
THE VITAL ROLE PLAYED BY FARMERS”**

**Yeo Valley Primary School, Barnstaple,
Nethercott House**



WHAT DO CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE LEARN?

Days start early on our immersive five-day residential and, whilst the cycle of the seasons and vagaries of the weather ensure that each day is different, there is a reassuring routine and structure to life on the farm.

A combination of physical farm tasks in compassionately tending to the animals and their welfare and maintaining the farms is combined with sowing, harvesting, and cooking tasks that anchor the young person to an understanding of the field > farm > fork journey. This improves food choices, increases the consumption of fresh, locally produced meat, fruit, and vegetables, which can help young people to develop longer term commitments to leading a healthier life.

A renewed focus on nature nurture is delivered through wellbeing activities to induce greater nature connectedness from long biodiversity walks, birdwatching on the coast and the riverside, beekeeping sessions, sustainable arts and crafts, mindfulness sessions, storytelling, poetry, and astronomy. Collaborating on tasks never before attempted develops courage, confidence and curiosity.

Children and young people learn to be mindful, empathetic and to notice their environment. They learn to take responsibility for themselves, each other, and work in harmony with the animals and the land. Free from digital intrusion, their analogue imaginations are liberated, and they enjoy mental health respite from the pressures of a life lived online.

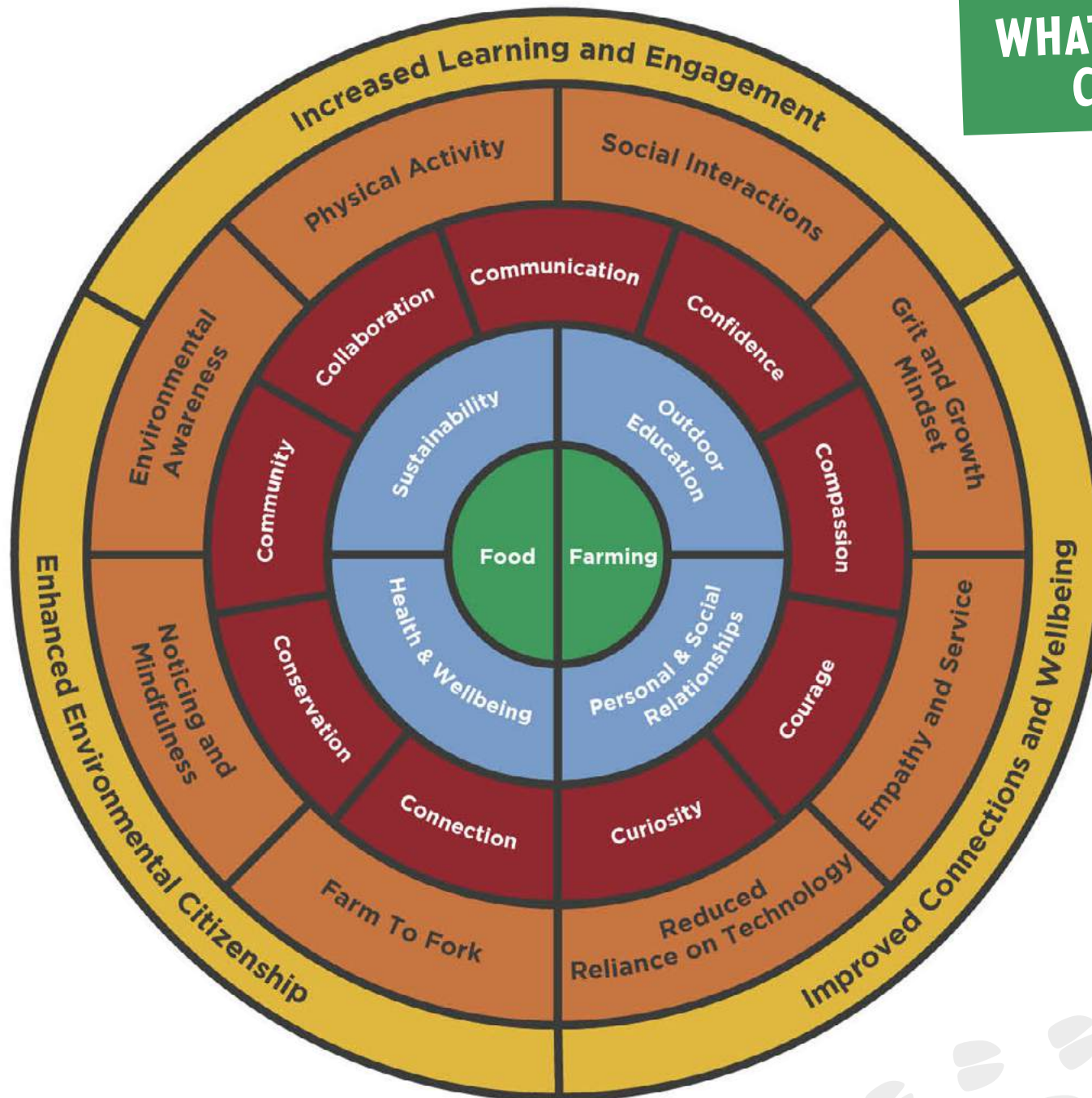
Being on the farm gives each child or young person that space to just be. With reduced stress levels, increased freedom and more meaningful interactions and connections, young people return home having developed greater resilience and attained an enormous sense of pride as a result of being a “Farmer for a Week.”

Farms for City Children knows that our week empowers active citizenship in our young people. Alumni contact us to report that their relationship with nature has been sustained from their visit on the farm as a child into adulthood. We know that the impact of providing these experiences in childhood means that we will give young people the agency to deal with the climate emergency and the loss of biodiversity. We are supporting them to ‘grow up greener’ and contribute to a sustainable future economy.

In the short term, we know that children and young people return happy and fulfilled, walking a little taller with knowledge, skills, and expertise that they did not have when they set off from home. They will never forget the memories they make, the relationships they cultivated or the way that they felt about themselves as they flourished through a week of “muck and magic” at Farms for City Children.



WHAT IS THE FARMS FOR CITY CHILDREN OFFER



10 BENEFITS OF TIME SPENT ON THE FARM



1
A unique and
immersive life
experience



2
Increased physical
activity and
healthy lifestyle



3
Improved
connections and
social interactions



4
Improved
mental health
and wellbeing



5
Reduced reliance
on technology



6
Enhanced sense
of environmental
citizenship



7
Meaningful
responsibilities and
acts of service



8
Embedding
curriculum learning
in real life situations



9
Powerful
new sensory
experiences



10
A nurturing
home from home
environment

OUTCOMES & IMPACT

INCREASED LEARNING AND ENGAGEMENT

Multiple studies assert that experiencing learning outside of a classroom setting enhances the way that a young person engages. Outdoor learning gives children and young people practical experience of curriculum subjects and enables them to make vital connections between their lessons and real-life scenarios.

The breadth, depth and variety of farming tasks and wellbeing activities during the immersive residential visit, support the school's commitment to improving student engagement, progress and attainment.

Children exposed to nature score higher on concentration and self-discipline, have greater developed awareness, reasoning and noticing skills, work better collaboratively in teams and show higher levels of empathy and compassion.

A week on the farm builds resilience and develops a growth mindset as young people encounter completely new challenges that test their perseverance to the limit. The transferable life-skills gained from this week can be leveraged upon return to the classroom environment for months to come.

From applying literacy and numeracy knowledge to real-work problems, to seeing practical applications of STEM subject knowledge in tasks across the farm, children and young people gain

an introduction to the world of work through hands on activities where they are responsible for the livestock and each other. They discover aptitudes and talents they did not know they had, and they begin to visualise a future for themselves in employment.



OUTCOMES & IMPACT

IMPROVED CONNECTIONS AND WELLBEING

One in six children aged five to 16 were identified as having a probable mental health issue in July 2021; a huge increase from one in nine in 2017. That's five children in every classroom.

Children and young people, and the teachers who care for them, need the opportunity to come together outside of the classroom and invest in health, wellbeing, and relationships. The self-esteem built from conquering challenging farm tasks is complemented by the space to be during nature sessions on coastal or biodiversity walks, in natural arts and crafts or from mindfulness sessions together.

The chance to play in nature, to build dens, turn wood, build campfires, and tell stories offers both the children and their teachers a time to decompress from the stresses of life. Reducing the reliance on technology and living off grid for the week liberates analogue imaginations and children and their teachers talk to each other, invent games, share discoveries and build connections that change behaviour and engagement upon return to school.





ENHANCED ENVIRONMENTAL CITIZENSHIP

Out of 14 nations surveyed, the UK ranks bottom in Europe for nature connectedness and wellbeing. Evidence shows that people with high levels of nature connectedness enjoy better mental health and are far more likely to live their lives in a more environmentally responsible way. A week at Farms for City Children explicitly teaches young people and their teachers how to be the future stewards of the countryside and how to connect more meaningfully with nature as it exists in their home locations.

Learning about sustainable farming and its links to climate protection, about biodiversity and securing species and habitats, and linking children and young people to where their food comes from is a key outcome of the work of the charity. Growing, harvesting, preparing, and cooking their own

food improves children's food choices, increases consumption of locally sourced fresh products and highlights the benefits for health around good eating habits. With so many of our children living with food insecurity, there has never been a more important time to connect them to the provenance of what they eat.

With schools now being asked to examine their teaching of climate and sustainability in the classroom, the immersive experience of life on the farm can provide compelling and enduring memories that empower young people to be the advocates for their planet tomorrow. Children return with a powerful sense of agency, seeing themselves as the change they want to see in the world, knowing that even back in the city there are choices they can make to protect our planet.



OUR YEAR IN NUMBERS



Total number of children
and young people:

3,288

Total number of
accompanying adults:

620

93

schools visited one of our farms
in the 2022/23 academic year



MEETING OUR PLEDGED OUTCOMES

98% of lead adults said the farm visit met or exceeded our pledge to **increase beneficiary learning and engagement.**

98% of lead adults said that young people's **social connections and wellbeing** was improved as a result of the visit.

95% of lead adults said that beneficiaries left with an **enhanced sense of environmental citizenship.**

WHAT OUR YOUNG BENEFICIARIES SAID...

93% said they now know more about nature.

88% made new friends or got to know their friends better.

90% were more active on the farm than they usually are at home.

84% said that they know more about where their food comes from.



ON REVIEWING A VISIT TO
ONE OF OUR FARMS, OUR
BENEFICIARY CHILDREN
AND YOUNG PEOPLE GAVE
US 4.6 STARS OUT OF 5!



LOWER
TREGINNIS

WICK COURT

NETHERCOTT
HOUSE

WHAT OUR TEACHERS TELL US

99% of lead adults said their children and young people had a good or outstanding increase in their awareness of nature.

93% of lead adults said there was a good or outstanding reduction of reliance on technology.

95% noticed good or outstanding improvements in children's social connections with each other and accompanying adults.

97% said that their children and young people experienced a good or outstanding impact on levels of physical activity.

Enhanced Environmental Citizenship

'The staff were all so knowledgeable and passionate about the environment, the children came away with a great understanding of their place within the environment, and their responsibilities as citizens.'

Lead Teacher, Holton Primary School, The Vale of Glamorgan

Increased learning and Engagement

'The children have learned more on this visit than in a year in the classroom. They are fully engaged, and children who have complex needs have thrived.'

I have been leading residential visits for 30 years and have visited many different places with groups of children. I have never been on a residential which has had such an amazing impact on the children.'

Head Teacher, Whitefield Primary School, Liverpool

Improved Connections and Wellbeing

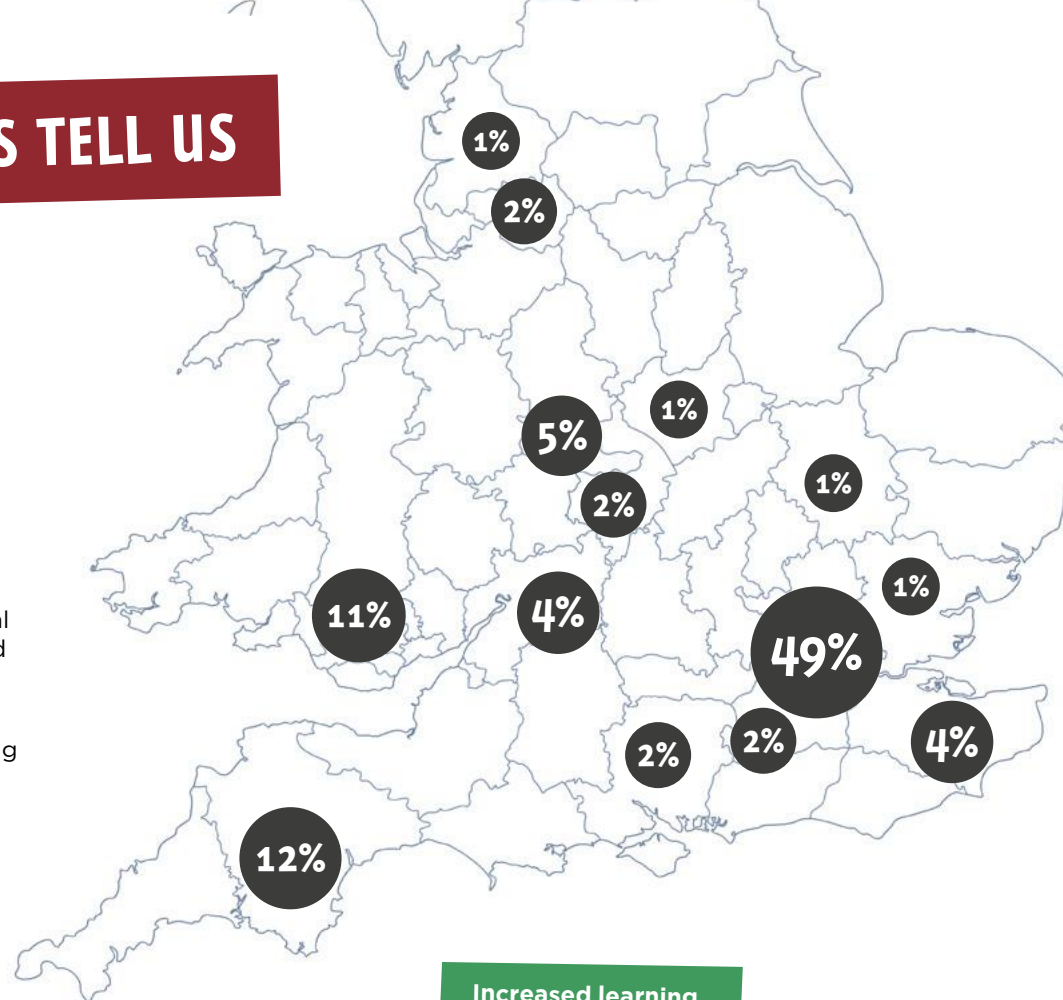
'The collaborative tasks encouraged the children to work together and to support each other. They were nurtured by the farm staff and, as a result, many children had the confidence to push themselves out of their comfort zones and overcome their fears. We enjoyed seeing them work with different people within the year group, and we hope they take these new-found friendships back to school.'

Lead Teacher, Charles Dickens Primary School, London

LOCATION

59%

of all school visits were by schools from the 30% most deprived neighbourhoods in England and Wales.



WHAT THE ADULTS SAY...

Since returning I have seen a huge improvement in their cohesion...

"In the past, children in the class had experienced friendship related issues and divides in the class. During the trip the children bonded and made friendships with lots of different children. Since returning, I have seen a huge improvement in their cohesion, as well as other staff commenting on their teamwork."

**St Peters C of E Primary School,
Hammersmith, Lower Treginnis**

The young people had a fantastic time at Wick Court Farm, Gloucestershire with @farmsforcitychildren.

"The young people had the chance to experience farm life firsthand, working on the farm and looking after the animals. For many of our young people, this is their first time on a farm and out of London. They had the chance to groom horses, feed calves, beekeeping, birdwatching, feeding chickens and turkeys, made their own pasties, wild lunch, sheep training, and so much more."

AAA Zone, Newham, Wick Court

Engaging in teaching...

"Children have learnt to listen, taking turns and engaging in teaching. Wellbeing has improved through activities provided outdoors without screen time and children who struggle to engage in school based learning have embraced the learning on the farm."

**Beechwood Primary Academy,
Plymouth, Nethercott House**

Children who struggle have excelled...

"All children were engaged at all times, learning new concepts and skills that can be taken back to school. Children who struggle at school have excelled. "I think I may do this job as I'm good at it and I'm not good at much at school" was great to hear - we've opened their horizons to new possibilities."

**Baguley Hall Primary, Manchester,
Wick Court**



Deepened their understanding of farming and coastal communities...



"The children have been able to experience farm life first-hand, which has deepened their understanding of farming and coastal communities. They can see where their food comes from, and how much hard work goes into growing and cultivating it. Being based on the farm has also enabled children to recall farming communities in their parents' and grandparents' home countries; this is something we didn't foresee, and it enabled the children to draw interesting comparisons."

Selwyn Primary School, London, Lower Treginnis

This experience has connected the dots.

"Our children would never have experienced the connections between themselves, the environment, their actions towards it and its impact upon them. This experience has connected the dots."

Weston Mill, Plymouth, Nethercott House

Since we have come back, there has been a massive leap in confidence amongst the children.

“Getting away from the city to a different place, and seeing the wider world is amazing. Learning where food comes from and seeing it from the start has been really eye opening for the children and the accompanying adults...Since we have come back, there has been a massive leap in confidence amongst the children. The progression we have seen from kids who really struggle is massive, and we know in six months this growth will be even greater”.

Darren Simpson, Youth Manager, Walton Children and Young People Community Project, Liverpool, Wick Court

Communication and teamwork

“All the key learning behaviours are valuable for our young people, particularly confidence because lots of our children lack confidence in their abilities. Communication and teamwork: each child developed these skills throughout the week. The majority are starting secondary school in September and will benefit from the skills learnt.”

Netherley Youth Community Initiative, Liverpool, Wick Court



WHAT OUR BENEFICIARIES SAY...

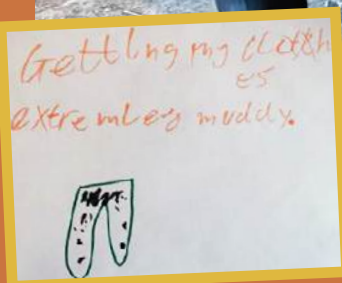


"In London there are trees, but out here is a lot of nature to take in, bushes, hay, trees; it's like opening a nice book and reading it, and every word has a big mouthful of wonderfulness."

Year 5 pupil, Goodrich Community Primary School, London

"Huge experience, learning how to farm and about the animals, and where our food comes from. How important farm animals are. How hard farmers' work. That you can do other things to make you happy than go on a screen or use technology. To be closer and be more respectful to others and animals. We all got more confident doing things that we are not sure about. We understand the food process more and that we have to get dirty and physically do some work."

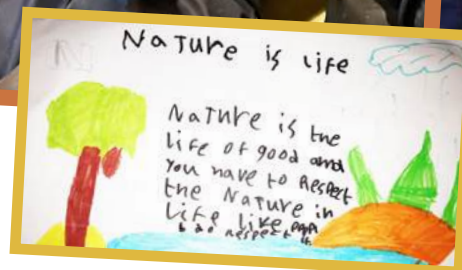
Year 6 pupil, St George and St Teresa Catholic Primary School, Solihull





"The most amazing thing was definitely finding out more about vegetables, especially potatoes because I thought that potatoes grew on trees, not underground!"

Year 6 pupil, County Bridge Primary, Walsall



"When I get home I will be mature, I won't be rude. I will always have my listening ears on. I won't speak over my teachers. I will follow the rules. I will behave. If someone is struggling, I will help them."

Year 6 pupil, Cadoxton Primary School, The Vale of Glamorgan



"The most amazing thing has been doing all the work on the farm, including the equine and going to the spinney."

Year 6 pupil, Laura Green Primary School, Plymouth



NETHERCOTT HOUSE

IDDESLEIGH, DEVON



The past year was a hive of activity at Nethercott House. We welcomed over 1,000 young people from schools and youth groups, 23 young people completed their Gold Duke of Edinburgh award, and we also had the privilege of working alongside 14 Ukrainian refugee families.

We have had a highly successful year for produce coming in to the farm from our beautiful walled garden and the children have loved the opportunity to plant, harvest, and then cook the food that they find in our garden and greenhouses.

Cooking sessions have been popular, resulting in the production of 1,150 pasties! Each regular pasty uses ingredients which are all sourced from Nethercott, and these sessions are led by Jenny, our Kitchen Manager and her team who turn Nethercott House into the most sumptuous restaurant at every food sitting. The children visiting are always astonished by the bounty of delicious food of all colours of the rainbow.



Our livestock, including rare breed Large Black pigs, poultry, and equine, have thrived and the addition of Derek the donkey from the Donkey Sanctuary has brought joy to the farm. The pigs have enjoyed many cycles of breeding this year, much to the delight of the children, and the poultry sessions remain as popular as ever. Our visitors continue to enjoy their work at our partner farmer Simon Ward's beef and sheep farm at Bridgetown, getting to see first-hand what commercial farming looks like, and enjoying a tractor ride along the narrow, winding Devon lanes.

Our beekeeping sessions have flourished thanks to the expertise and generosity of the Okehampton Beekeepers and our wonderful volunteer Pat. Duke of Edinburgh students played a pivotal role in building a dedicated bee shed, complete with an observation hive, setting the stage for future learning, and their week on the farm working towards accreditation for their GOLD award was so successful that we will run two weeks in 2024.

One of the significant developments this year has been the reclamation of land and buildings at Burrow. Our first flock of rare breed Whitefaced Dartmoor sheep now proudly graze the land around us, and the newly renovated lambing barn witnessed its first births. Having this facility to continue working with the children at night in a barn setting will add more value to the offer at the farm. Our new herd of rare breed Devon cattle produced two healthy heifer calves, marking another milestone for the farm.

Our Farm Operations Manager, Adam has driven significant regenerative change at Nethercott House through his commitment to agroecology and agroforestry projects that ensure a more harmonious farming practice, connecting us to our nature stewardship responsibilities. Our commitment to environmental conservation is further evidenced by partnerships with organisations like The Devon Wildlife Trust and The Woodland Trust. This year, we initiated the hay meadow creation project,



spreading seeds in the hope of nurturing a flourishing ecosystem, and we are exploring funded projects in 2024 around decommissioning of our slurry pit with the creation of a wetland area, hedgerows to create nature corridors, and the development of a new orchard space.

In August, our garden volunteers joined us in welcoming the public to our Open Garden. The walled garden is spectacular, and it helps us to feast all year round. Notably, our apple and pear cordons have finally met at the top of the arch after five years of meticulous pruning. The walled garden helps us to feast all year round and plays a crucial role in educating children about where their food comes from, giving them tools to take home that they can deploy in their own home or school setting when starting their own horticulture projects.



WICK COURT

ARLINGHAM, GLOUCESTERSHIRE

This year we have hosted 31 schools at Wick Court, serving 1,125 children and 173 teachers and group leaders. We hosted weeklong residentials from three community groups across the year and welcomed children in the care system, with their carers, for a day visit. Beneficiaries have experienced a packed programme including: lambing, calving, and farrowing, and have moved 20 tonnes of woodchip!

This year we celebrated 25 years of Farms for City Children at Wick Court by inviting local people who have been instrumental in the farm's success, with the visiting children of Marsh Hill Primary School, Walsall, hosting a tea party with music, cake, and games.

We welcomed four Hereford cows to our herd, joining the Gloucester Cattle and in late August had a beautiful new calf born, and we have welcomed a new boar to the farm. The harvest has been successful, and we are working as closely as ever with the Merrett's family on our partner dairy farm.

In January, we rehomed a Turkey stag that has been spared the fate of Christmas dinner and have hatched a number of his chicks, meaning that the children at this farm, and our others, can see the strange but wonderful changes a turkey chick goes through before it reaches maturity.

Thanks to successful fundraising, we have acquired a new tractor. Our beekeeping season has been successful this year, increasing from three colonies to eight, harvesting enough honey for the children to experience and for the bees to 'over-winter'. We have a beautifully rustic craft room set up in the space where cider has been pressed for hundreds of years, and we are now working with the fleeces of our own flock of Dorset, Grey-faced Dartmoor, and Ryland sheep.

We successfully planted 700 trees donated by Gloucestershire County Council and The Woodland Trust. A flagship project, the children managed to plant, mulch, and water most of them, and Gloucestershire Federation of Young Farmers' Clubs supported some of the heavier toil. We are grateful to Gloucestershire County Council for their support.

We continue to take part in the National Bat Monitoring Programme and a healthy number of 110 bats were counted exiting the building, the vast majority being some of the UK's rarer bats Lesser Horseshoe and Brown Long-Eared bats.

We have made some wonderful funding partnerships with local organisations, including Gloucestershire Agricultural House Foundation who purchased some essential items of farm equipment. Stonehouse Milk donated 5p for every litre of milk sold between May and July to the charity. Westbury Young Farmers, the Cirencester Quakers and Frampton Church, have also fundraised for us, as have Frampton and Cheltenham WI, Severn Vale Rotary Club, Cheltenham U3A, Stroud 41 Club and various other local generous individual givers. We have also refurbished our Apple Pressing and Produce Room thanks to The Halpin Trust

In addition to producing and serving over 17,000 delicious meals, the kitchen team have worked hard to preserve the glut of fruit and vegetables from the orchards and gardens, producing 270 jams and chutneys. We have achieved a food offer to be proud of, including much of the vegetables consumed by the beneficiaries coming from our own gardens, and all of the meat coming from our farm. In addition, we continue to supply local farm shops and restaurants with meat.

We have the ongoing support of nine weekly volunteers and we continue to have our corporate supporters Tyler Grange visit us every other month, and a volunteering work party from Babcock International and the local Rotary Club. We welcomed over 400 people to our Open Farm Event in June. We have attended local shows and markets to represent the work of the charity and we are proud to have been invited to attend the Gloucestershire and District Agricultural Valuers Association 100th Annual Meeting, attended by HRH Princess Royal. We also hosted the AGM of the British Grassland Society alongside our partner farmer and have developed a strong partnership with St James City Farm in central Gloucester, who are doing some innovative community and farming initiatives in one of the most economically deprived parts of the city.



LOWER TREGINNIS

ST DAVIDS, PEMBROKESHIRE

Lower Treginnis Farm has been a hub of activity this year from the excitement of children planting a variety of produce, to engaging craft sessions and coastal walks, and not forgetting the thriving livestock and vibrant flower tunnel, the farm welcomed 1,000 visiting children and young people.

Many of our visitors came from local schools across the Pembrokeshire and South Wales area as part of the Ernest Cook Trust funded Outdoor Week of Learning (OWL) collaboration. This partnership addressed the needs of deprived communities in the Barry, The Vale of Glamorgan, resulting in a project that brought multiple schools together in a collaborative Festival of Learning.

It has been a fantastic year for produce on the farm, and the children eagerly put their hands in the earth planting a thousand pumpkins and, in the autumn, the pumpkin yield was substantial, allowing the charity, with the support of the local fundraising group, The Friends of Treginnis, to open the farm to local neighbours for a pumpkin patch fundraiser. Lower Treginnis is so proud to open its doors to the St Davids community for events, and we are looking forward to hosting the fete in 2024 and making it bigger and better than ever before.





Lower Treginnis enjoys an extraordinary location as the most westerly farm in Wales, and children are introduced to the wonders of the shoreline on coastal walks that provide insight into the fragility of marine life. Many visiting the farm have never been in the countryside, and in many cases, they have never seen the sea. The circular walk that tracks the Southwest path create moments for nature observation, surveys, and unique birdwatching opportunities. Staring out at the endless horizon fills children with a sense of the vastness of the world, and the endless possibilities for their lives in their future.

The craft room is a place of sanctuary at Lower Treginnis, and children can decompress from the busy outdoor activities with sessions where they weave willow, paint pebbles, sew, craft, use timber and shells collected from the beach to express themselves through art. These sessions in the craft room, and outside in the walled garden area around the fire-pit, have become firm favourites with the children and visiting adults because they create



moments of mindfulness and pause so needed in our busy lives, and they give the children mementos of their time on the farm to take home to families.

Amid all the activities, the farm's animals thrived under the attentive care of our dedicated team. From milking goats by hand, feeding pigs and tending to poultry, the animals embody the farm's vitality and connection to nature. Children love to work alongside our partner farmer Aled, with his huge commercial flock of sheep, and this gifts the children and teachers the experience of shepherding, stock maintenance, and of course, the absolute privilege of watching new life come into the world. Lambing is always a highlight at Lower Treginnis, but it also provides the context for powerful discussions with visitors about the provenance of the food they eat, how it is reared, culled, and prepared for sale for a large supermarket chain.

The donkeys remain a favourite of our children, and the equine sessions of grooming and mucking out can only be topped by the opportunity of walking the animals



along the coastline. We are fortunate to have our own farm shop, and Gardener Alan, ensures that the shelves are always stocked with an amazing array of produce. The children are involved in planting and harvesting our food, then weighing, labelling, and preparing it for retail. Incredible work experience that is hard to come by now for young people in schools.

This produce also finds its way into the kitchens where thousands of nutritious meals are cooked by our kitchen team. Cooking sessions each day enable the children to prepare meals for each other and then eat communally in our stunning dining room overlooking the ocean. Life skills abound in these sessions that travel home with the children, and they are proud of being able to trace the origin of food on their plate back to the earth where they have seen it grown and harvested.

LOOKING TO OUR FUTURE

Farms for City Children embraces 2024 with a sense of great hope and optimism. Our three-year Strategic Business Plan (2024-2027) will come into effect which sees the charity project ambitions for a more sustainable financial future and a renewed commitment to inclusion by maintaining year-round operations that welcome increasingly diverse beneficiaries to experience our offer, including an extension of our work post-16.

We will continue to refine, develop, and seek out new project opportunities in 2024 particularly around strategic, geographic areas of deprivation along the M5 corridor. Considering accessible transport routes to all three of our farms has driven us to target locations in the Midlands for 2024 where the multiple indices of deprivation informs us that children are navigating their young lives with the most pressing needs.

A core element of our Business Plan is growth in our fundraising team, and 2024 will see us diversify income streams through developing expertise in our team from fundraisers seeking to secure donations from varied pipelines. Expert stewardship of our existing individual donors, corporate funders, and our very significant portfolio of loyal and generous Trusts and Foundations, continues to be a strategic priority for the charity, and we look forward to continuing to nurture those existing relationships and to welcome new multi-year funders to our family.

Impact and evaluation processes launched in 2023 are now firmly bedded in and we look forward in 2024 to

refining these approaches as we continue to diversify our beneficiary groups to include more young people with SEND and older age beneficiaries coming from post 16 settings. The fantastic piece of research delivered by Harper Adams student Liz Tree for her MRes is now available to be shared, and we look forward to disseminating this powerful piece of impact research to promote the efficacy of our offer. Ensuring that the feedback from our schools and groups, from the children and their teachers, is routinely shared publicly, is a priority next year as our new Communications Officer develops our case studies, our social media presence, and our YouTube channel.

Building upon the significant partnerships cultivated in 2023, the charity looks forward to advancing key relationships that extend our bookings, generate income from funding, and advance our advocacy position as leaders in the debate around food, farming and environmental issues.

These partnerships also yield some exciting and highly anticipated events in 2024, commencing with Farms for City Children's first ever speaking invitation at the Oxford Farming Conference in January 2024. Contributing to a panel discussion around enhancing equity, diversity and inclusion in the agricultural sector will no doubt be a highlight of our calendar and we hope to share with the wider sector how our charity is part of a solution to diversifying new entrants into this profession by drawing on our multi-ethnic and multi-cultural beneficiary groups and welcoming young people from non-rural environments.



We eagerly anticipate events that showcase the power of partnership, to be held at the Butchers Hall with the support of the Worshipful Company of Butchers livery in June 2024. Bringing together our schools, teachers, children and young people, funders, donors, and strategic partners, we hope that this event will spotlight how much can be achieved when people come together and build alignment around a mission.

None of this work would be possible without the continued support of some incredible schools, teachers, partners, funders, donors and of course our amazing staff team. We are immensely grateful to all involved in making Farms for City Children the wonderful charity that it is, and for having enduring faith in our ability to serve children and young people.

If you would like to know more about our offer, or how you can help us to reach even more beneficiaries, please get in touch through the following channels.



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