

THE FARMING LIFE CENTRE

**ANNUAL REVIEW
2020-21**



FROM THE BOARD...

'The Farming Life Centre has had a refreshing year despite the adversities that we have all experienced.

2020 started with some changes to the trustee make up, serving under the leadership of Christopher Morris, and our extremely capable Charity manager.

We met regularly via 'Zoom' for planning and board meetings and gelled well together as a group.

Very active fund raising during the pandemic has meant that the Charity is in a very good position to hit the ground running as we return to more normal times.

The rural social groups are already starting up again and we are here to help rural people in need and develop connectivity via the walking groups.'

FOREWARD

Our activities are charitable and the projects delivered aim to benefit those most in need. We aim to tackle wider determinants of health and impact on our rural and farming communities who are affected by distance decay.

Our review gives an insight to some of the work we have done and hope that it gives a flavour of how our projects can really make a difference.

2020 - 2021 was a year like no other with most of our projects put on hold due to the ongoing global health pandemic. With Brexit implications alongside this, a host of new challenges emerged bringing uncertainty and difficulties to our rural and farming communities. The impact on our daily lives and our mental health has been huge and only now can we begin to emerge from this, begin to re-start and re-connect with our communities and embrace new ways of working.

Let us not forget the positives. Despite the restrictions of Covid-19, the work of the Charity continued. We supported our beneficiaries in new ways and embraced innovative working using digital technology. With 'Zoom' Board meetings, digital events and online Rural Social Groups we continued to engage with our supporters and continued to build relationships with our key partners.

Our profile has been raised, we have welcomed new trustees to the board, we have developed new projects and we are well placed to support rural and farming communities and help them to become more resilient and overcome any challenges they may be facing.

Now, more than ever our services and projects will be needed to help farm businesses and rural communities get back on track. The Farming Life Centre will ensure it is responsive, adapts services and future projects to support our beneficiaries in the best way that we can.

THANK YOU to our funders, staff, trustees and volunteers who all help to deliver our projects and support the Rural Communities within The Peak District, Staffordshire Moorlands and surrounding areas.

OBJECTIVES & ACTIVITIES

Our cause according to our Memorandum and Articles of Association:

“The relief of sickness, promotion of health and relief of financial hardship among the farming community in the Peak District”

Our Mission:

To provide services and development facilities for our farming and rural community in a welcoming, friendly and accessible way.

To ensure our provision of services will contribute to improved health and well being in our rural communities.

To provide information and support to farmers and their families in times of hardship.

In all our work we will promote and celebrate Peak District hill farming, past, present and future.

Our Vision:

To encourage and support the economic wellbeing of farming and rural families through training and networking opportunities related to business development and resilience in farming and rural communities.

To develop new initiatives and maintain existing programmes which will improve the health and wellbeing of farming and rural communities and reduce health inequalities in this population.

To provide a welcoming, friendly and accessible community access point for use by the Peak district farmers and their families.

Funders and supporters in 2020 - 2021

We would like to give sincere thanks to the following organisations, projects and individuals for their financial support during 2020 - 2021

Co-op Local Community Fund

Derbyshire County Council - Health & Wellbeing Partnership

Derbyshire Dales Council for Voluntary Services

Derbyshire Police and Crime Commissioners Vulnerability Fund

Duke of Devonshire Charitable Trust

Macmillan Cancer Support

National Lottery Local Connections Fund

Open Gate Trust

Prince's Countryside Fund

South West Peak Landscape Partnership & Heritage Lottery Fund



ABOUT US...

The Farming Life Centre supports the farming and rural community of the Derbyshire and Staffordshire Peak District.

We have run continuous projects to address the (often hidden) health, social and economic inequalities and deprivation within the upland farming community, which are delivered at outreach locations and from our base in the Agricultural Business Centre in Bakewell.

The underlying ethos of all our initiatives is to improve the resilience of the rural community by supporting residents of all ages to deal with their challenges in a timely way – before they reach a point of crisis.

The Farming Life Centre is open to everyone living in rural communities. We accept self-referrals as well as referrals from social care and health professionals.

Over the years the charity has successfully developed and run projects in the fields of mental and physical health, heritage, the arts, business support and development, skills development and confidence building



PROJECTS AND OTHER NOTABLE PIECES OF WORK

Walking for Health Group

Led by trained walk leaders: Pauline Bramley, John Thomas and Kay Allinson. Short “easy” walks were planned which started from a different location each month and followed good paths with plenty of points of farming interest to see. The walks took place on Thursday afternoons starting at 1.30pm. The walks generally aim to do a circular route which takes about one hour at a steady, easy pace. Some routes include stiles and/or short ascents and descents. Wherever possible there is an opportunity to visit a café afterwards for refreshments and a good chat.



Rural Social Groups

They are lively meetings of retired and semi retired farmers and family members who meet for tea and a chat with meals out and a variety of guest speakers.

The social groups are based in:

- Ashford in the Water which met weekly at the 'War Memorial Institute'
- Hartington a monthly meeting at the Village Hall
- Boylestone just south of Ashbourne based at the Methodist Church met monthly on a Thursday.

Celebrating Farming - Past, Present and Future

Peak Land Lives is a small part of a project called “Landscape at a Crossroads” which is a five year £3.9m scheme funded by the Heritage Lottery fund.



The Farming Life Centre is running this project with local authors, historians and photographers Christine Gregory and Sheila Hine.

Tracing changes in farming since the second world war. The book was published in September 2019 and is now being sold in a number of bookshops, Tourist Information Centres, online and at agricultural events and livestock market gatherings.

PROJECTS AND OTHER NOTABLE PIECES OF WORK

The Macmillan Rural Health Outreach Service



The Macmillan Rural Health Outreach Service, funded by Macmillan, was founded in 2014 in partnership with Voluntary & Community Services Peaks & Dales. The Service had been put in place in recognition of the particular challenges faced by farming and rural people in Derbyshire when they are affected by cancer and other life limiting conditions. It could provide information and support for those rural people affected by ill-health and long term conditions.

It was originally funded for two years, then Farming Life Centre were contracted to deliver the service and are now engaged in a four year stepped programme until 2022. The Service is there for carers, family and friends. It is coordinated by Rachel Metcalfe who was available to talk to in confidence about any worries and concerns. Many people find that by simply talking through their situation they are able to discover new and better ways of coping.

The co-ordinator hosted a fortnightly drop-in on market day at Bakewell Agricultural Business Centre where people could call in for a chat, a bit of light refreshment and pick up information on sources of support available in the local area.



The Project has faced challenges in its delivery during 2020, as the unforeseen impact of a global pandemic reached very rural Derbyshire. The Project has been able to adapt some services and retain connections with vulnerable people. When restrictions ease there could also be an increase in support needed by those who have not accessed cancer and other health treatments during the pandemic. Some of the online activity is likely to continue to flourish and be enjoyed by participants, and may only require light touch support for example, with identifying speakers and any technical issues. It will be interesting to evaluate this in Year 3 and to understand more about the challenges and benefits of this type of support.

The funding tapered arrangement, together with the impact of the pandemic, means that additional funds will be required to support the project's long-term ability to succeed.

PROJECTS AND OTHER NOTABLE PIECES OF WORK

Rural Reconnections:

The National Lottery Local Connections Fund helped us to reconnect with all our beneficiaries during challenging times. A garden centre voucher was sent out along with a message of hope and support, letting them know we were thinking about them. 100 garden vouchers distributed to all FLC beneficiaries, friends, supporters and volunteers. These were really well received and the project contributed to helping to reduce loneliness and isolation. Funding was spent by 31st March 2021

'Thank you very much for our Easter card and especially the garden vouchers, we very much appreciate them and will enjoy spending them, we are making a new border in the garden at the moment so they will come in handy.'



Chair Based Pilates:

A great opportunity for some of our Rural Social Group members to access something a little different. A 'Five Ways to Wellbeing' grant from Derbyshire Dales Council for Voluntary Service helped towards providing 45 sessions with a qualified instructor.

Members of the community were encouraged to come together to reconnect and begin to develop their physical strength in order for them to keep mobile and well.

The Prince's Countryside Fund – Rural Resilience & Business Development:

A new project for 2021. Lorna Critchlow joined The Farming Life Centre team in February as our new Rural Resilience and Business Development Coordinator. Lorna is on hand to offer practical support while helping rural businesses to access workshops, networking events and other support groups in the area. A number of face-to face and online sessions have been planned for 2021-2022.



PROJECTS AND OTHER NOTABLE PIECES OF WORK

Volunteers

Volunteers are recruited through our friends, contacts, statutory partners and via our social media accounts. They form an essential part of the activities of the organisation.

Volunteers helped support the Walking for Health group, Rural Social groups as well as helping with all things technical and provide invaluable support with the website.



Information Technology

The Farming Life Centre continues to update the website, Facebook, twitter and Instagram pages. There continues to be an increase in followers.

Partnerships

The Development of effective partnerships with statutory and voluntary agencies, and the representation of the farming community at a strategic level formed an important part of FLC's work.

During the year, The Farming Life Centre continued to build on the network partnerships, local, regional and national. The organisation has developed strong links and has engaged in many partnership groups including:

- Derbyshire County Council
- Derbyshire Dales Health and Wellbeing Partnership
- Farming Community Network
- Derbyshire Dales Council for Voluntary Service
- LEADER—Local Action Group
- Methodist Ministry
- National Farmers Union
- Natural England
- Peak District National Park Authority
- Prince's Countryside Fund
- Rural Action Derbyshire - Derbyshire Rural Chaplaincy
- Social Connectedness—Local Action Group

These current partnerships have supported the core work and services provided by the FLC which has enabled the beneficiaries to:

Feel supported and listened to, thanks to our regular outreach presence at local farming gatherings and the centre

Develop their skills, including business skills and creative skills

Improve their confidence and self esteem through active participation

Develop, maintain or improve their participation in community life by being part of our social network

Become connected and/or maintain their connections, both with people and with the environment

Maintain better health – Improve beneficiary well-being through involvement with our social network and learning skills that promote resilience and enhance mental well-being.

**THE FARMING LIFE CENTRE
COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE**

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds Year to 31 Mar 2021 £	Total Funds Year to 31 Mar 2020 £
Income from:					
Donations	3	951	-	951	880
Charitable activities	4	12,403	30,720	43,123	42,615
Sundry income		100		100	-
Investment income	5	-	-	-	16
Total incoming resources		13,454	30,720	44,174	43,511
<u>Expenditure on:</u>					
Raising funds		-	-	-	-
Charitable activities		15,316	22,200	37,516	66,517
Total expenditure	6	15,316	22,200	37,516	66,517
Net income (expenditure)		(1,862)	8,520	6,658	(23,006)
Transfer between funds		-	-	-	-
Net movement in funds		(1,862)	8,520	6,658	(23,006)
Fund balances at 1 Apr 2020		29,297	23,650	52,947	75,953
Fund balances at 31 March 2021		27,435	32,170	59,605	52,947

The company had no new or discontinued activities during the year.