

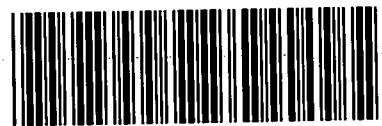
Annual Report & Accounts 2022



**Country
Trust**

Connecting children with
the land that sustains us all

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Trustees:

The Trustees who served the charity during the year were as follows:

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Chelmsford, Essex, CM2 0AW

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**The Country Trust is the leading national
educational charity that connects children
from areas of high social and economic
disadvantage with the land that sustains us all.**



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How we support our beneficiaries

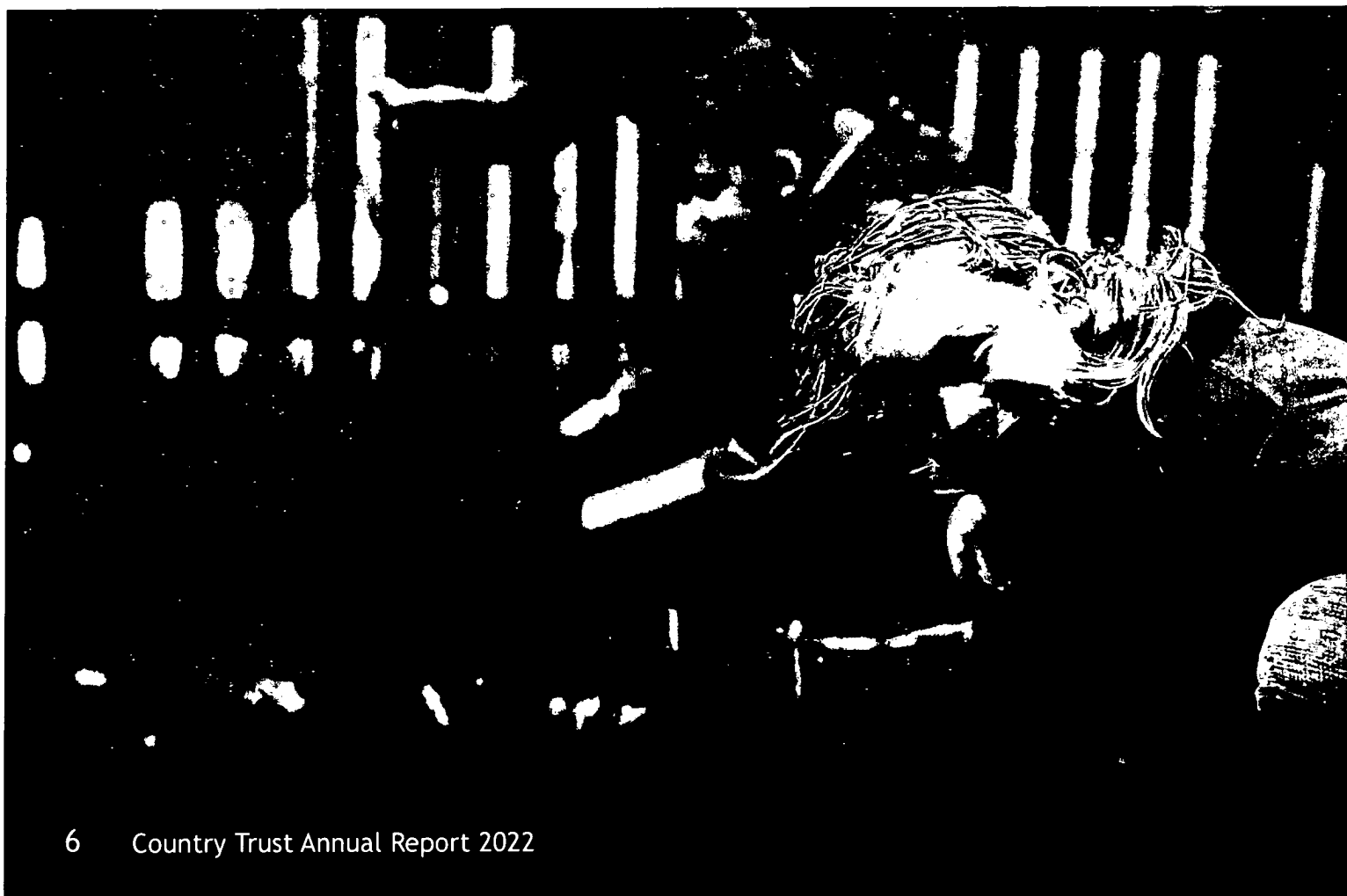
During the 2022 calendar year:

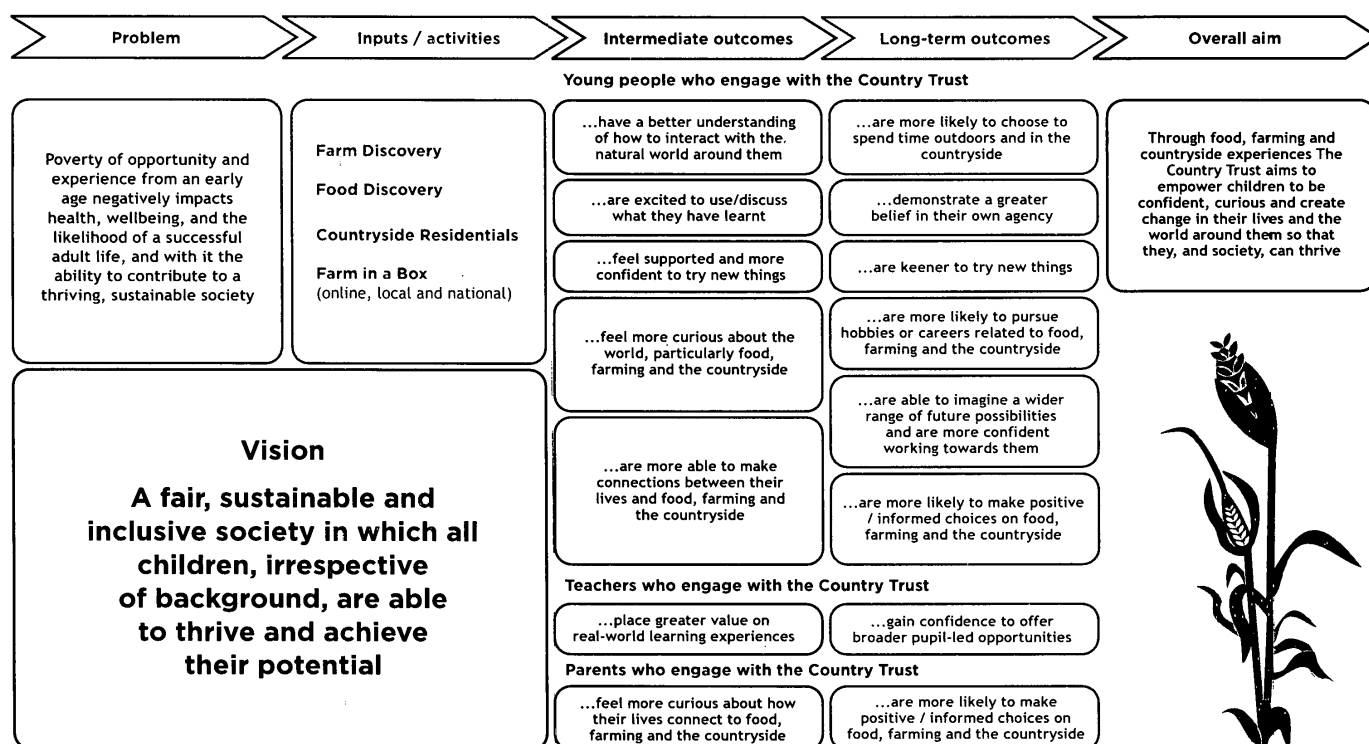
We connected 55,370 children with the land that sustains us all, across our Farm, Residential, Food Discovery and Farm in a Box programmes, providing 260,000 hours of engagement.

We championed the importance of first-hand experiences of food and farming with government.

We began two new areas of work - supporting teachers to sustain the impact of our programmes and the Plant Your Pants Soil Health Campaign, and for the first time provided a significant offer for Early Years and Foundation Stage, through our EYFS Farm in a Box.

We completed the first year of our 5 Year Plan, evaluating our impact against our new Theory of Change.





How we support our beneficiaries

Farm Discovery

Day-visits to working farms for school and community groups. These are led by our Coordinators who work with host farmers and teachers/group leaders to ensure a safe visit with appropriate sensory experiences and hands-on activities.



Food Discovery

A Country Trust Coordinator takes a class on a journey through food: growing vegetables, preparing and cooking meals, tasting produce, visiting local farms, running their own markets, and experiencing the joy of sharing a feast. The depth of the programme gives children the time to explore many aspects of food.

Sustaining Impact

Throughout our programmes we train teachers: formally through CPD and ITT sessions and informally through modelling and conversations. In 2022 we started a new pilot project in partnership with a large multi-academy trust, equipping teachers to take children on the seeds to supper journey.

Countryside Residentials

Immersing children in the countryside for 2-4 days, Coordinators organise and support a tailored programme, including a farm visit, working with teachers and third party providers to ensure a memorable, safe, and happy time away from home.



Farm in a Box

A box of farm-centred activities and resources created by The Country Trust, delivered by school staff either: Local - created by a local Coordinator with a local farm for a local school, or National - a range of boxes funded by different partners, packed and distributed centrally to hundreds of schools.

Core Values:



We believe you grow by learning from others



We think the quality of our connections with others has an important effect on who we can be and what we can do



We are active participants in a world which inspires and sustains us

Aspirational values:



We want everyone to know that their contribution is welcome and valued



We aspire to be child-centred, no matter what our role is

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

We want our team and our programmes to better reflect the diversity of the children and the communities we serve and continue to take steps towards this.

We have worked hard to try and promote recruitment opportunities through a wide range of networks and are exploring when and how we can support people to join us who may not have the formal qualifications or experience that we have required in the past.

Recruitment of Trustees during 2022 resulted in a more diverse Board and we are excited about the connections, creativity and inspiration that this is unlocking.

Activities

How the Charity's activities deliver public benefit

In setting our programme each year we have regard to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit. The Trustees always ensure that the programmes we undertake are in line with our charitable objectives and aims. Our ambitious aims are that:

- **Every child should have the opportunity to visit a real working farm, to discover through first-hand experience where their food comes from.**
- **Every child should have the chance to discover connections between the food they eat, their own health and the health of the planet.**
- **Every child should have the opportunity to develop the confidence and curiosity to explore the living world.**

We use an evaluation framework to gather feedback on all the activities we offer. We collate and analyse the feedback and this then informs our programme design. Feedback from children, teachers and parents suggests that the Trust is achieving its goal of helping to improve the life chances of the children who take part in our programmes. We are in the unique position of being able to provide programmes which support teachers to engage children with learning and support physical, emotional and social wellbeing.

We can build food knowledge and food confidence, provide access to food and farming related climate learning and enable children to discover that they can be active participants. We can create connections between pupils, farmers and the natural world. We can speak up on relevant education, agriculture and food issues, taking the lead or supporting others.

How we support our beneficiaries

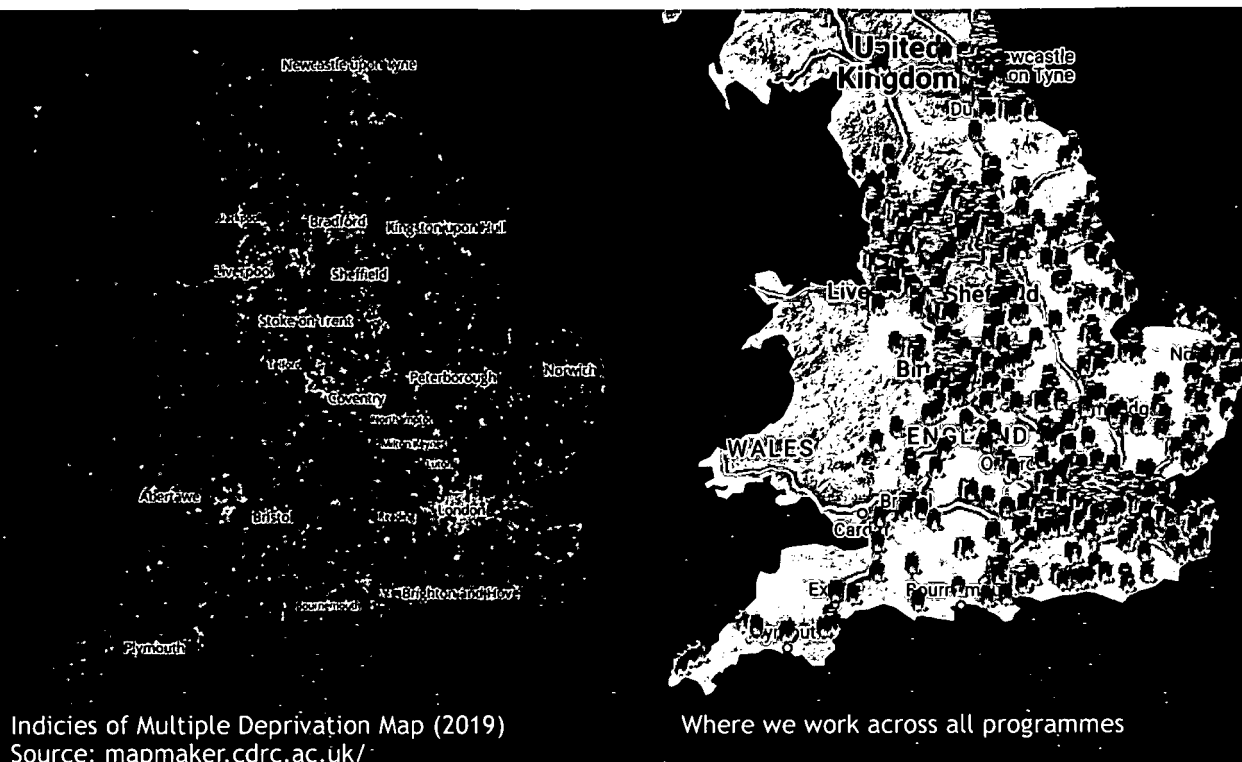
How we work

All our programmes are designed to create moments that provoke curiosity, making learning irresistible. Children learn most deeply when they are following their natural curiosity as it places them at the centre of their learning.

Giving children time, space and the tools to understand the world around them - whether it's in their school grounds, a farm or at the beach - allows children to discover for themselves the wonder and connectedness of life.

As so many of the children we work with have limited experiences, we ensure that new experiences are crafted carefully and consciously into our programmes, building confidence and happy memories.





Who we support

We work with children who experience disadvantage through:

- low family income - according to the Child Poverty Action Group 29% of children in the UK (4.2 million) were in poverty in 2021-2022;
- being on the margins of, or excluded from, or refusing mainstream education;
- Having SEN/D (Special Educational Needs/Disabilities) or SEMH needs (Social, Emotional and Mental Health);
- being looked-after children, children in care;
- having responsibilities as a Young Carer;
- having refugee or asylum seeker status.

These children may rarely travel outside their immediate community and therefore may have limited access to quality green space and the countryside.

They may have limited access to good, healthy and varied food;

They may have little or no opportunity to grow things, have contact with animals, pursue hobbies or take part in cultural or sporting activities;

They are more likely to miss out on opportunities to meet positive adult role models, to be inspired and pursue ambitions.

Poverty of opportunity and experience from an early age can negatively impact health, wellbeing and access to education. This then can affect children's ability to achieve success in adult life.

How we support our beneficiaries

Our operating context

- The number of children eligible for Free School Meals has increased by 32% since 2020 (9% in 2022)
- Children's physical and mental health has been negatively impacted, with particular concern for those with SEN/D and those eligible for FSM
- 50% of schools expect to be in deficit next year. Schools are already cutting visits and enrichment activities.
- Country Trust Coordinators report that:
 - Children have greater educational, emotional, social, behavioural and physical issues
 - Many teachers are more stressed and chaotic, more prone to frequently changing plans, cancelling at short notice
- Each CT activity is more costly to deliver as a result of developing more support, training, resources etc and compensating our delivery team for delays and cancellations.
- Many funders report that they have been 'overwhelmed' with applications, and some individual giving is affected by the cost-of-living crisis.
- There is heightened awareness of the needs of children from disadvantaged circumstances and the importance of addressing food poverty, affordable nutrition and poverty of opportunity.
- Farmers have spoken increasingly about their disconnection from consumers and their concerns about the future of the agricultural workforce (in its broadest sense).
- The future of the new agricultural support system ELM has been uncertain and new trade deals may bring competition from cheaper food produced to lower standards.
- Increasing concerns about food security
- Evidence of climate change affecting our food production has continued to grow

The continuing impact of Covid

Recently published reports back up what our Coordinators are experiencing in the course of their work.

Early Years

Published by the First 1001 Days Movement and the Institute of Health Visiting in November 2022, the report, *'Casting Long Shadows: The ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on babies, their families and the services that support them,'*¹ finds that:

- An overwhelming majority, 95 per cent of Health Visitor respondents said they are seeing an ongoing negative impact on babies' and young children's social skills due to the pandemic.
- 92 per cent believe the pandemic has had a negative impact on children's communication, speech and language skills, emotional wellbeing and development.
- Almost half of respondents said that 'many' babies they work with are affected by parental anxiety, stress or depression due to the pandemic, which is affecting bonding and responsive care.
- More than 4 in 10 (44 per cent) said that 'many' of the babies they work with are currently affected by increased exposure to domestic conflict, child abuse and neglect - higher than the proportion of professionals making the same observation in summer 2020 (29 per cent).
- A total of 40 per cent of survey respondents reported that 'many' babies they worked with had been affected by the loss of family income or increased risk of food poverty.

Key stage One and Two

Despite the Department for Education's "Education Recovery Programme" implemented to counteract the impact of Covid, the National Audit Office concluded in February 2023 that: *'the gap between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils at the end of primary school had widened since 2019.'*²

Government statistics show that Covid 19 is likely to have had a damaging effect on school attendance. Disadvantaged pupils are more likely to miss school. The latest national statistics showed 33.6% of pupils who were eligible for free school meals were persistently absent in Autumn 2021, compared to 20.0% of pupils who were not eligible.

How we support our beneficiaries

Furthermore, 30.6% of pupils who receive SEND support were persistently absent in Autumn 2021, compared with 21.5% for pupils who are not identified with SEND.³

Teachers

In total, over seven million teacher days have been lost to stress and mental health issues in the past five years. They showed a steady increase, highlighting the pressures that the pandemic put on teaching staff.⁴

Where we work

Our Farm, Food and Residential Coordinators are located across England and North Wales delivering hands-on, real-world food and farm experiences.

Farm in a Box local remains a very useful alternative to be able to offer schools who cancel or are unable to plan visits. During 2022 we were able to increase our team slightly, but we also lost Coordinators. Our Coordinators are self-employed and our operating context continues to be impacted by budget cuts in schools, staff shortages and ill health meaning that some of our delivery team have had to seek greater financial security in employed roles elsewhere. Our Farm in a Box National Programme enables us to reach schools located in the country's most deprived areas where we don't yet have a presence on the ground.

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1. <https://parentinfantfoundation.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/F1001D-Casting-Long-Shadows-FINAL-NOV-22.pdf>
 2. <https://www.nao.org.uk/reports/education-recovery-in-schools-in-england/>
 3. <https://committees.parliament.uk/committee/203/education-committee>
 4. FOI request <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2022/jul/31/teacher-sick-days-soar-as-poor-conditions-take-toll-on-mental-health>

Activities, achievements, performance and public benefit

OUR REACH - 2022 CALENDAR YEAR

We connected **55,370** children with the land across our Farm, Farm in a Box, Residential and Food Discovery programmes.



35,147 pupils - **1,339** classes - received our Farm in a Box Local and National programmes. That's **140,588** hours of engagement (assumes **35,147** children spent 4 hours on activities. Some will have spent longer but some teachers may not have fully utilised their Box).

20,223 children on real working farms - approximately **80,890** hours (assumes each child spends 4 hours on the farm. Includes Residential and Food Discovery children).



1,537 children took part in a Food Discovery programme - approximately **21,518** hours (programmes still slightly variable coming out of Covid so we have assumed **14** hours per child)

643 children spent between 3 and 5 days in the countryside on a Countryside Discovery Residential visit. Approximately **23,148** hours (assumes **3 x 12** hour days)



Our impact at a glance

(statistics taken from evaluation of activities during the 2021-2 academic year)

Focus on: Curiosity

We want children who engage with our programmes to:

- better understand how to interact with the natural world around them
- feel more curious about the world, particularly food, farming and the countryside

Children learn best when they can see how what they study links to real world experiences and connects with and supports their learning of other subjects.

“Learning in this fashion engages and enthuses pupils, develops their natural curiosity, and motivates them to find out more.”

(Maintaining Curiosity, a Survey into Science Education in Schools, Ofsted Publications 2013)

We work hard to support teachers and children to understand the vital place that food, farming and the countryside has in all our lives: it is the land that sustains us all. For many of the children we work with, the farmed landscape is a new world and a new experience. Helping children explore this world on their own terms and at their own pace is critical as it gives them ownership of their knowledge through their own curious exploration.

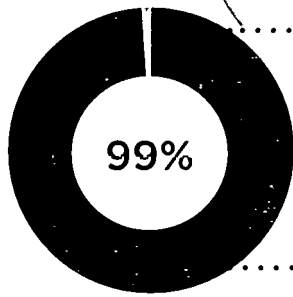
“I loved when we dug through the soil... I learned the actual names for some insects so it was pretty cool.”

Pupil, Great Yarmouth Primary Academy

An increasing number of teachers tell us that they have children in their class with sensory processing needs. These pupils can find encounters in the natural world particularly problematic. However, carefully scaffolded opportunities can support many children to overcome their fears.

I got to smell a pineapple weed, it smelled great.

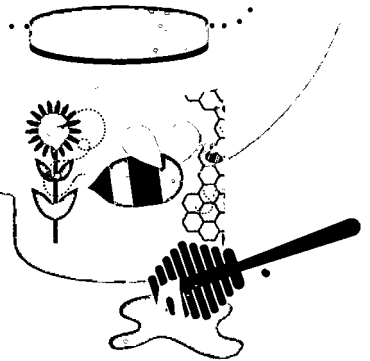
Pupil, Calcot Junior School



of teachers said they had observed all or most of their children engaging with the natural world through touching and feeling, listening, tasting, smelling and observing

I've never tasted honey until today. I love it! It tastes so sweet! The bees are so clever to make it and so kind to share it with us. Thank you bees!

Pupil, Bishop's Primary School



Gave children more awe and wonder about the natural world and the importance of nature in areas they didn't realise.

Laura Vincent, Scunthorpe CofE Primary School

Children are encouraged to ask questions to further their learning during our programmes - what do they want to find out? Who can they ask?

So, there's more than one type of apple? I love apples but didn't think they had different tastes.

James Knott CofE Primary School

How does the same seeds know to grow different types of peas? All the pea seeds in here (magazine) look the same. How do they get different?

Pupil, Banks Road Primary School



Our impact at a glance

(statistics taken from evaluation of activities during the 2021-2 academic year)



Focus on: Confidence

We want children who engage with our programmes to:

- feel supported, confident to try new things

Confident children believe in themselves and their abilities and ideas. Our Coordinators and host farmers consciously scaffold experiences for children so that they can build up their confidence in doing new things in small steps. This could be tasting new foods, touching a farm animal, or going pony trekking.

“It’s been amazing to see the children grow in confidence trying new foods. I have loved seeing them try things for the first time and whilst I was aware of the level of deprivation in the school it has reminded me of how limited some of our children’s diet and experiences were. This has opened up their world a little bit and given the adults an opportunity to talk about new foods as well.”

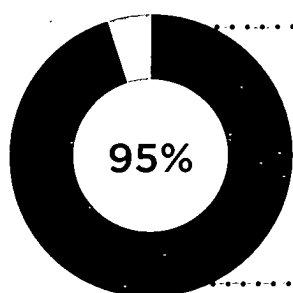
Teacher, Waterside Primary School

“A child who did not want to stroke the chicken went from hands in her pockets, to a little touch with a finger to a quick stroke to a continuous stroke with a big grin on her face. This was achieved by the farmer choosing the right chicken and being supportive and mindful.”

Observation from Coordinator for Valley Primary Academy visit

“I loved the horse riding and I even asked my mum if I can start a horse riding lesson there because I had so much fun.”

Amelia, St Joseph’s Primary School, Yorkshire school thank you letter



of children said they had done something for the first time

“Some of the shy children were very active and participated a lot. Had more confidence. Children with English as an additional language were talking more and happier.”

Martin Sjaz, St Cuthberts

We want children who engage with our programmes to::

- **be excited to use/discuss what they have learnt**

This desire to talk about what they have learnt and done often has a longer term effect, supporting the retention of learning, with lots of teachers mentioning that children are still talking about their experiences after the visit or session, which then naturally feeds into writing across different subject areas:



The engagement from our children was amazing and every child came back and could talk about the experience. Many children had been able to retain a lot of the new vocabulary which they had heard.

Luisa Pancisi, St James' C of E Infants

Pupils who speak English as an additional language, or who lack confidence speaking to others, particularly benefit from these farm-centred experiences:

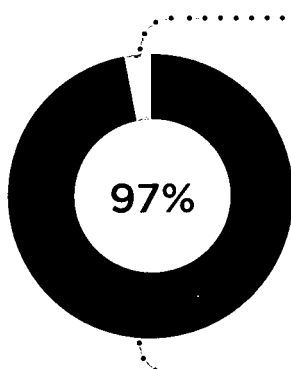
One child who is usually quite reserved, really came out of their shell when we were gardening as he found he was good at it. It was lovely to see him become more of a 'leader' and more confident at talking to his peers.

Teacher, Food Discovery end of programme evaluation,
Waterside Primary Academy

Doing new things generates feelings of pride and independence, and can open opportunities for new hobbies and interests:

The majority of the children loved the visit. This is something that the children in my school would not normally be able to see and so the children enjoyed talking about it later that week in our lessons.

Richard Nicholls, Star Academy



of teachers tell us that they observed all or most of their pupils excited to talk with each other about what they have done and learnt during our programmes



Our impact at a glance

(statistics taken from evaluation of activities during the 2021-2 academic year)

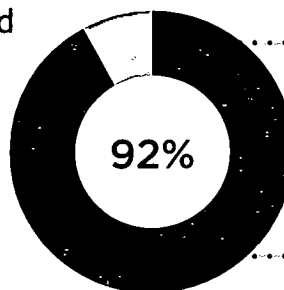


Focus on: Connections

We want children who engage with our programmes to be more able to make connections between their lives and food, farming and the countryside.

As children explore the world around them through our programmes, they make sense of the journey of food, from farm to fork, and start to make all sorts of connections. The most fundamental of these is understanding how important farms are and over 90% of the children we have worked with say they think farms are important - a 9% higher score in comparison with a national Childwise survey asking the same question. The connections children make range from environmental to emotional to academic.

This could be ascribed to the happy memories they have built during the visit (all those new experiences which have boosted their confidence), but Coordinators also try to do activities which teachers and children can repeat so that they can recreate the same feelings they had on the farm:



92% of children say that they want to go back to the farm

“We were lying on the tarp under the trees doing a listening exercise and afterwards talking about how being in the forest made us feel, the answers I expected were given including ‘relaxed, calm, peaceful, chilled, sleepy’ and then a boy said ‘alive’ which I thought was wonderful.”

Coordinator session report after The Beeches Primary school visit

Some of the connections children make are academic: their curiosity and the tools they have used during the day to discover things for themselves enable them to start making connections with their classroom learning:

“It was really hands on and the children were able to consolidate the learning they had carried out in school. The children all said how much they had enjoyed themselves and how much they had learnt.”

Amanda Batterbee, Marshland St James Primary & Nursery School

Learning in the 'real-world' supports children to make their own connections, further supporting the retention of their learning:

We were looking at tiny holes in sprigs of rosemary with magnifiers, and talking about photosynthesis. He said 'it's like a perfect circle, with plants giving out oxygen and taking in carbon dioxide, and animals doing it the other way round. We all depend on each other'. I could see that it was a total 'light bulb' moment for him.

Farmer Host, Yorkshire

Over the course of longer programmes, like Food Discovery, children can realise their own agency, and start to take learning from school and farm to their home environments:

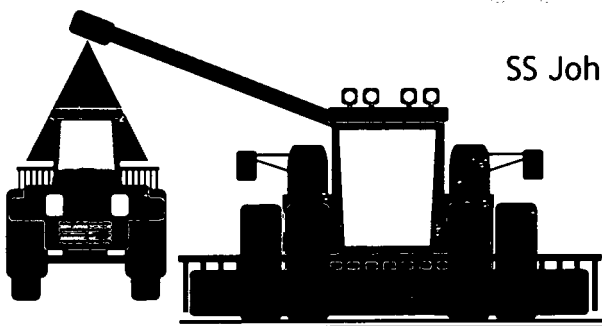
The children have become more aware that they are in control of the food they eat, and able to make their own choices. They are now looking forward to growing their own food at home and educating their parents!

Teacher, end of programme questionnaire, Beccles Primary Academy

With all our programmes, to a greater or lesser extent, there are also opportunities for teachers to explore how food, farming and the countryside are integral to global topics like sustainability:

Many of our pupils are disadvantaged and would not engage in activities involving cooking, growing, farming etc. at home. [...] The sustainability aspect of the Food Discovery programme is vital in supporting our children's cultural capital and international responsibilities for a better future. We are starting to weave the UN sustainable goals into the curriculum, through Food Discovery these can be implemented in much more depth. The children have grown in the understanding of the importance of making sustainable changes, and their actions can have an impact both positively and negatively on the world.

Teacher, end of programme questionnaire,
SS John Fisher and Thomas More Catholic Primary



Our impact at a glance

(statistics taken from evaluation of activities during the 2021-2 academic year)

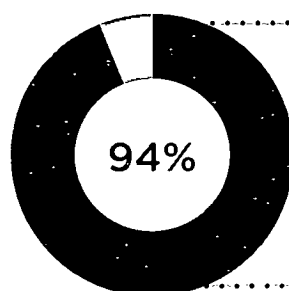
Sustaining Impact: Teachers

We want teachers who engage with our programmes to place greater value on real-world learning experiences and, longer term, gain the confidence to offer broader pupil-led opportunities.

Teachers play a vital role in ensuring that the work that we do in our programmes has a lasting and deep impact. Teachers see their pupils every day and can use the farm-centred experiences that we offer as a springboard for learning across the curriculum and to support their pupils' personal development. We offer teacher training within Food Discovery but acknowledge that much of the training across our programmes is informally modelled by our Coordinators sharing knowledge, expertise and Country Trust values.

“The idea of cooking in the classroom and making a big pot to split between 30 children [...] making a small portion to take home proved that to do a food activity is not as tricky as you might think. Gives me more confidence to do something with food in other topic/science lessons.”

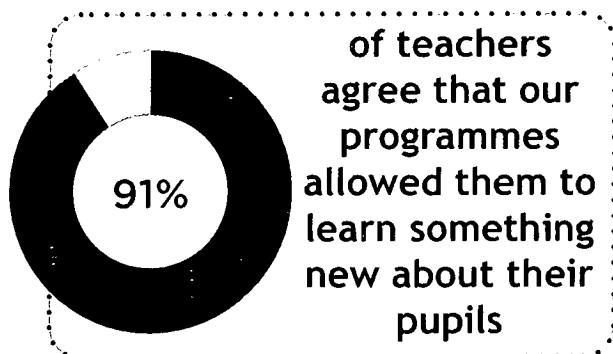
Teacher, Aylesbury Vale Academy



of teachers who we worked with said that they intended to run more real-world learning activities

“It has been wonderful to allow children to flourish within structured, hands on learning. This has been an area I have rolled out to many more lessons to encourage engagement from all.”

Teacher, Beccles Primary



of teachers agree that our programmes allowed them to learn something new about their pupils

“The experience allowed myself and other teachers to see the huge benefit being outside has on enhancing the children's learning and engagement.”

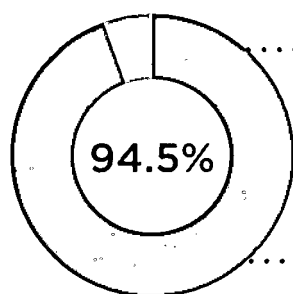
Teacher, Maple Court Academy

The idea of starting with things in a box really offered some curiosity into what we were doing - this is an element that I would try again.

Elizabeth Hill, Rossmere Academy

The day has clearly had a massive impact on my class. It makes such a difference when they can actually make those real life connections that bring their learning to life.

Teacher, Poplars Community Primary School visit



of teachers agree that they feel more confident using the natural world in their teaching after being involved in one of our programmes

In our two school-based programmes, Food Discovery and Farm in a Box, 74% of teachers agreed that their pupils had taken the lead in their learning, further demonstrating that this style of teaching is achievable in the classroom.

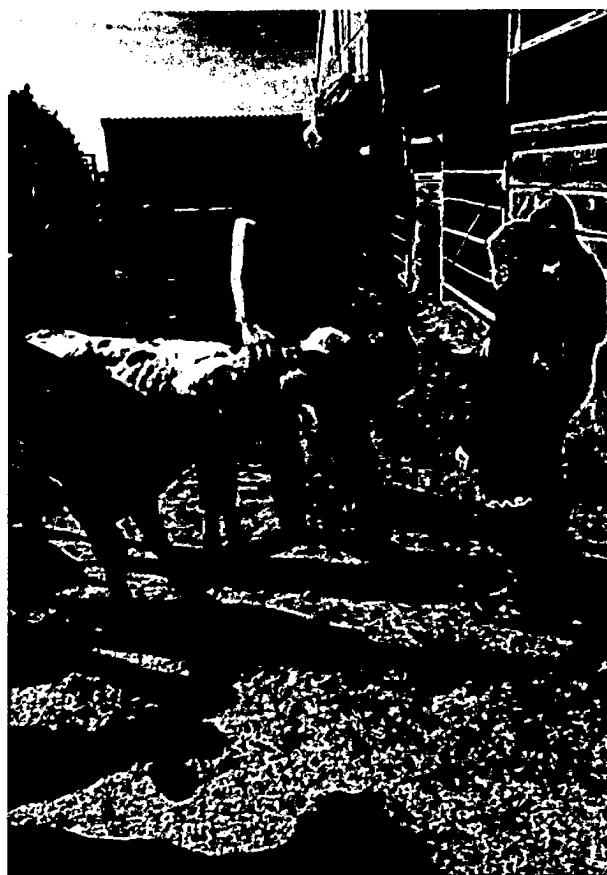


Case Study: Ollie's Farm Visit

Ollie, year 4, visited a dairy farm with his class. It wasn't his first visit to a farm, but he said he felt nervous about being there as, "it's different to being in school, so it's unusual."

We went to look at the growing calves and had the opportunity to go and bottle feed them and touch them. Ollie was very keen to watch how they behaved and had a lot of questions about how old they were, why their tongues were so rough. We went into the milking parlour next and were able to watch the cows being milked. Ollie was fascinated and wanted to know everything:

"Why is that one not being milked? Look at that one, there's already milk spurting out! Are they going to use that one what's been on the floor? That won't be clean". When the cows had gone out, the herdsman gave the children the opportunity to put their fingers into the suction units so they could feel what the cows felt. Ollie and his friend agreed, "It's really gentle, the cows probably really like it."



Ollie noticed that the cows were eating while they were being milked and when they looked at the feed nuts he enjoyed feeling and smelling them commenting, "They smell quite sweet".

The herdsman brought out a patient and friendly cow which all the children were allowed to take turns to stroke while she was eating some nuts. Ollie couldn't get over how soft she felt.

Case Study: Alma's Farm Visit

Alma came on a visit to a mixed farm with her mixed year 1 and 2 class. She had never been to a farm before and was very excited to be there, although she was worried that the animals might bite.

She was pleased that she had put her own wellies on, as some people in her class had to change their shoes when they arrived at the farm and wear some from the farmer's welly bank.

Alma was really engaged with all the activities during the day: bottle feeding lambs, pretending to be a lamb after watching them play, looking at cows and chickens, grinding wheat to make flour, exploring a tractor, gathering different plants in a field and doing a bug hunt.

She was very keen to learn words for the new things she was seeing and on the class's walk back to the bus at the end of the day she instigated a guessing word game which enabled all of her peers to practice some of the vocabulary they had learnt and used during the day like butterfly, froghopper, ladybird, buttercup.



Farm Discovery

This year we have developed an online pupil feedback form automatically sent to the class teacher as soon as our Coordinators submit a session report to our database. We are really pleased at the response and to have made progress with our ambition to listen to children's voices more.

The difference we make (analysis of 493 teacher feedback forms - a return rate of 80.8%. Pupil feedback was from 768 forms representing 2,517 pupils, a total of 15% of the children we worked with)

Impact on children:

- 99% of teachers said that all or most of their pupils had engaged with the natural world, through observing, listening, smelling and touching
- 86% of children agreed that they would like to find out more about farming with 61% strongly agreeing
- 99% of teachers reported observing that all or most of their children were excited to talk to each other about what they were doing and learning
- 95% of teachers reported observing that all or most of their children wanted to talk to the farmer and/or Coordinator about what they were learning
- 91% of pupil respondents said they tried something for the first time on their visit
- 92% of the children who gave us feedback said they would like to go back to the farm with 83% being very happy at the thought
- 90% of children felt that farms were important with 75% feeling strongly that they were

“It was lovely to see the children building their confidence, lots were anxious about feeding/touching the animals and by the end of the trip, all children were confident doing so!”

Teacher, Coates Lane

Impact on teachers:

- 93% of teachers intended to use a farm visit next year as a core aspect of their curriculum planning with 71% strongly agreeing
- 95% of teachers intend to run more 'real world' learning activities with their pupils with 62% strongly agreeing
- 98% of teachers feel more confident in using the natural world in their teaching with 62% strongly agreeing
- 97% of teachers felt better equipped/inspired to bring elements of farming into their classroom teaching with 62% strongly agreeing

Quality:

- 99% of teachers rated the communication and information received prior to the visit as very good or excellent
- 100% of teachers rated the organisation and delivery on the day of the visit as very good or excellent
- 99% of teachers rated the Health and Safety on the visit as very good or excellent

The engagement from our children was amazing and every child came back and could talk about the experience. Many children had been able to retain a lot of the new vocabulary which they had heard. It was great to hear the girls saying 'we could be farmers too' breaking down gender stereotypes.

Luisa Pancisi, St James' C of E Infants

A fabulous experience, location, beautiful place to visit - great for staff and children's wellbeing, totally contrast to school. Children so motivated to ask questions and take part in all touching, feeding activities. Brilliant! Thanks Rosie, Philippa.

Shaun Mohan, Lache Primary

A lot of the comments were about the tasting activity which we did next to the milking area. Really making that link that the milk from the cows makes this food. One of the girls made a point of bringing 'cows milk' in her drinks bottle and saying that it had to go in the fridge so it doesn't go off. Loads of amazing learning that would be so difficult to replicate in a classroom!!!

email from Peter Bradbury, Dee Banks School after a visit

Food Discovery

The difference we make (To evaluate our impact we use before and after programme questionnaires and end of session feedback forms for teachers, before and after programme questionnaires using a smileyometer and open feedback for pupils, and Coordinator session reports)

Impact on children:

- At the end of the programme 96% of teachers either agreed or strongly agreed Food Discovery was an experience that most of their pupils would not normally have
- Food Discovery Coordinators told us that in 78% of sessions all children interacted with the natural world
- 86% of teachers told us that all or most of the pupils in their class had grown in confidence in trying new things throughout Food Discovery
- 96% of teachers told us that all or most of the pupils in their class wanted to talk to each other about what they were doing in Food Discovery
- 78% of teachers told us that all or most of the pupils in their class had reported talking to their families about what they had done or learnt in Food Discovery
- The proportion of children who told us they know how to prepare some or most vegetables increased from 70% at the beginning of the programme to 91% at the end of the programme
- 78% of teachers thought that all or most of their pupils developed their teamwork skills and 74% of teachers thought that pupils had developed their independence skills while taking part in Food Discovery

“A child that was particularly afraid of insects ended up looking in awe at a beetle she’d stumbled across, taking time to observe and describe it to her friends.”

Coordinator session report, Moreland Primary School

“Normally I wouldn’t try this, but because I’ve made it myself and tasted all the ingredients I’m definitely going to eat it! The courgette was amazing!”

Reported speech from children at a cooking session,
Pear Tree Community Junior School

Impact on teachers:

- At the end of the programme 95% of teachers either agreed or strongly agreed that they were confident leading cooking session in the classroom
- At the end of the programme 83% of teachers either agreed or strongly agreed that they were confident leading food growing sessions with pupils
- At the end of the programme 77% of teachers either agreed or strongly agreed that they were confident using elements of farming in their teaching
- Teachers used Food Discovery to enhance a wide variety of curriculum subject areas, with science being the most frequently mentioned, as well as taking inspiration from the style of learning, use of spaces, structure and management of sessions, and parental involvement

Quality:

- 99.3% of Food Discovery sessions were rated very good or excellent for management and organisation
- 98.2% of Food Discovery sessions were rated very good or excellent for pupil enjoyment
- 87% of teachers said that all pupils enjoyed taking part in the programme as a whole
- 99.6% of Food Discovery sessions were rated very good or excellent for health and safety



Farm in a Box

Local (prepared by our Coordinators on a per school basis working with one farmer for each school) and National (ordered and delivered centrally at scale on a given theme - Discover Warburtons Wheat and Climate Action in 2021/2)

The difference we make (responses were gathered from teacher surveys, pupil feedback forms were trialled, but response rates were disappointingly low, something that we have recently found a way to improve on!)

Impact on children:

- 96% of teachers reported that all or most pupils were excited to talk to each other about what they were learning and doing
- 92.3% of teachers agreed that pupils are better prepared for visiting a farm
- For teachers who completed the feedback form having had a Live link with a farmer, 92% said most or all of their pupils wanted to talk to the farmer/Coordinator to ask them questions
- 100% teachers stated that most or all of their pupils interacted (touched/observed/listened) with the natural world and 96% said all or most pupils enjoyed the activities

Pupils were extremely enthusiastic to learn, this includes most of our children who have English as an additional language. It encouraged them to communicate!

R Clarke St Marys Cockerton

The sensory aspects to the Farm in a Box were brilliant. All activities today really encouraged discussions and encouraged opportunities to learn new vocabulary. All the children had a really fantastic day, and experienced things for the very first time.

Georgia Knights, Hazlewood Community

Impact on teachers:

- 96% of teachers said that the Box fully met or exceeded any objectives they had planned
- 96.7% of teachers rated the box content relevance 5 or 6 out of 6
- 100% of respondent teachers said they would recommend the Discover Warburtons Wheat Farm in a Box to other schools
- 92.3% of teachers agreed that the activities in the Box had better equipped them to use farming in their future classroom teaching
- 85% of teachers agreed that they intended to run more real-world learning activities and to use a FIAB as a core aspect of future curriculum planning

Quality:

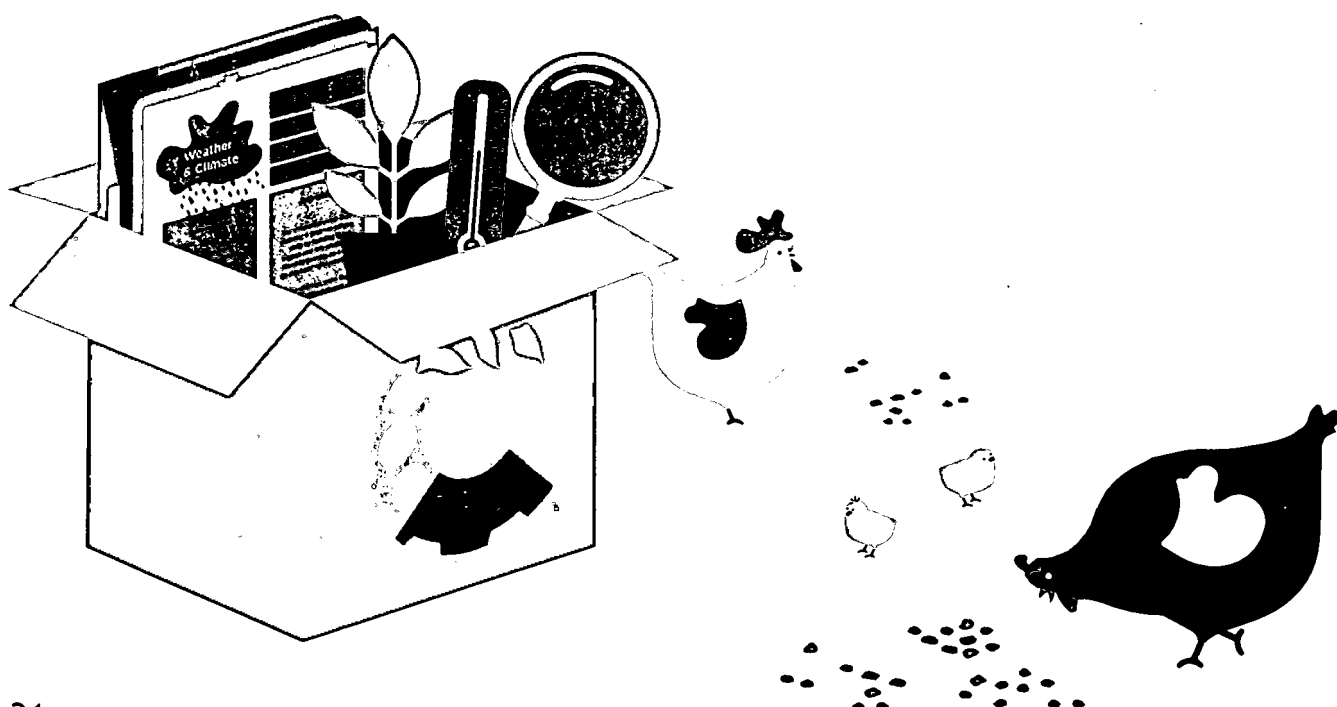
- 100% of teachers rated the communication and planning 5 or 6 out of 6
- 95% agreed or strongly agreed that the ordering and delivery process ran smoothly for them (FIAB National

I liked the links it made for children from nature to their own lives ie farm to fork. It made them think about processes and initial to final product.

Joanne Wright, Leiston Primary School

The farm in a box resources have opened their eyes to life outside of their immediate community.

Felicity Rountree, Western Primary School



Case Study: Nathan's Residential

Nathan, year 4, was on a Residential visit to the Yorkshire Dales with his class. Most of his class hadn't stayed away from home since before Covid, if at all, and most hadn't ever left their urban Yorkshire town.

They had arrived the day before and were all quite tired after quite an emotional first-night away from home.

There was a 2 mile walk in the morning, including crossing a river using stepping stones. There were lots of stops to learn about the countryside they were walking in, how it was farmed, and with time learning to look out for specific plants and signs of life.

The children knew that there would be a quiz in the evening covering some of this information. Nathan was struggling a bit with both the length of the walk (as were most children), and that in the afternoon they would be doing pony trekking which he was very anxious about.

He asked his teacher several times during the walk what his horse would be like, how big it would be, whether he would like it. After lunch, when we arrived at the pony trekking centre, Nathan waited nervously by the horse

he had been matched with for someone to help him on. With some assistance he mounted the horse and once he felt stable, he beamed and said, "I can feel the horse's heart beating!".

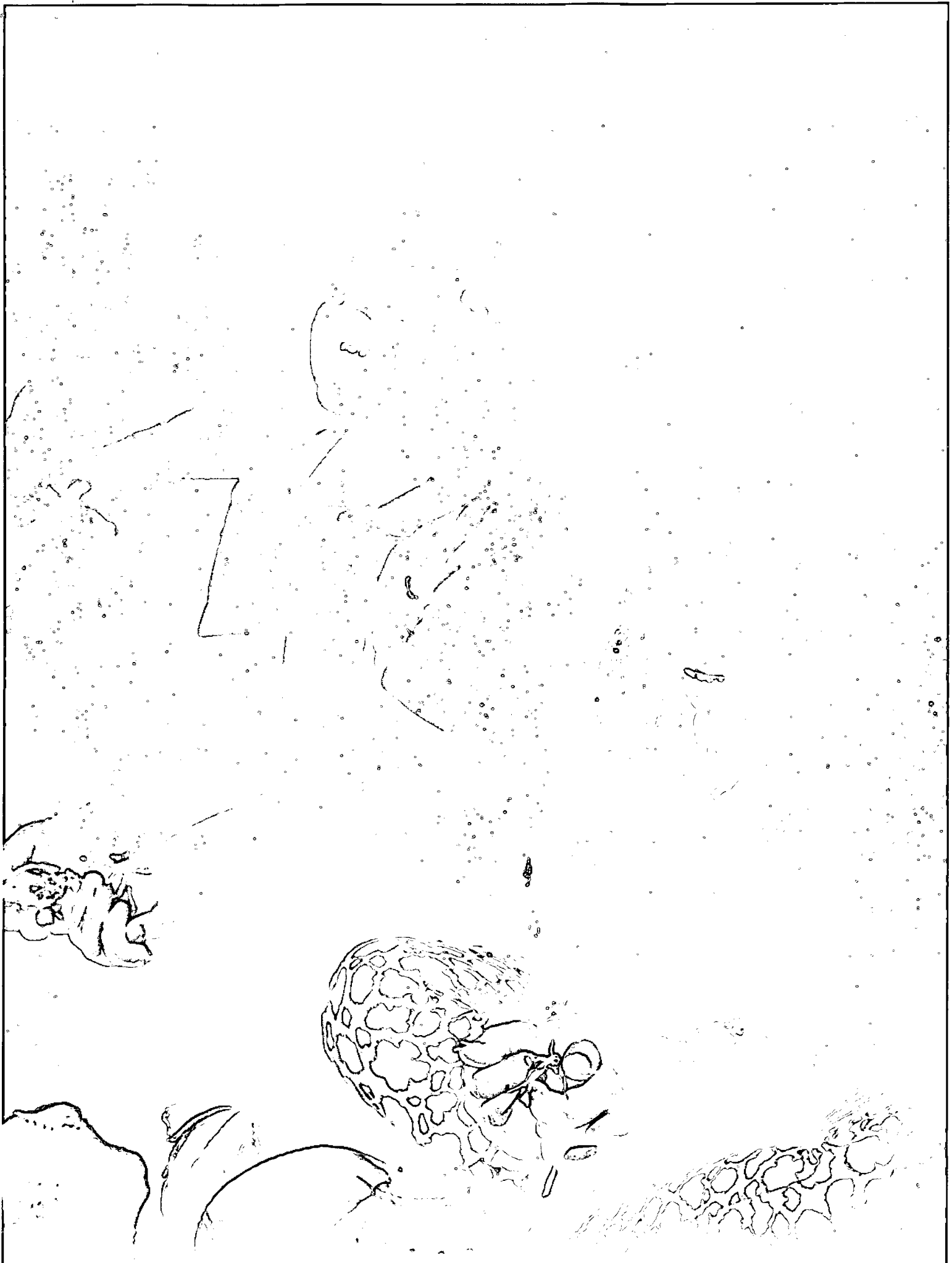
As they went on their short trek, he learnt he was very good at controlling his pony, "I'm so good at stopping him", and he was very proud of himself and grew in confidence over the afternoon.

All the children were very keen to exchange their pony experiences once they had dismounted, comparing how old their ponies were and discovering that they were all younger than the ponies.

They visited a trout farm after they had been pony trekking, and Nathan touched a massive trout which he said felt cold and slippery, and which amazed him.

They spent some time exploring a purpose built dry stone wall, climbing stiles and crawling through holes, and they all were absorbed by this experience.

The overall experience for Nathan, and his class, was success in lots of gentle, achievable challenges in a new environment away from home.



Countryside Discovery Residentials

The difference we make (*analysis of feedback from 6 residentials and 3 run as a series of day visits*)

Impact on children:

- Pupils rated the residentials on average 4.2 stars out of a maximum of 5 stars
- 87% of pupils did something they had not done before, with 73% of respondents mentioning doing new things as their favourite part of the residential
- There was an increase of 29% in children who thought farms were important, after the residential
- 100% of teachers felt that all or most of the children were excited to talk about what they have learnt



Impact on teachers:

- 100% of responding teachers said that they plan to use the residential as a core aspect of their curriculum planning next year
- 100% of responding teachers would recommend our residentials
- 50% of teachers told us in their pre-visit survey that they run 'real world' learning activities less than once a month while 100% of teachers who responded in the post-visit evaluation told us that they feel empowered to use more real-world learning experience in their work

Quality:

- 100% of teachers rated the communication and information received prior to the residential as excellent
- 100% of teachers rated the organisation and delivery of the residential as excellent
- 100% of teachers rated the Health and Safety on the residential as excellent

“I found out that plants can be edible. Not all of them, but most of them. They can cure illnesses, heal you, and help you feel better.”

Suffolk Residential, Post-visit pupil feedback

“Memories for life. A great understanding of what is effectively an hour from their front doors.”

Yorkshire Post-visit Teacher evaluation

“I’m going to be a hairdresser but in one of these little villages. I want to get away from all the lights and the noise. My town is too stressful. I love it here, this is where I belong, I know it.”

St Clare’s Pupil, Yorkshire Residential

New developments

Under the 'Diversification' pillar of our 5 Year Plan we developed and launched two new programmes in 2022 and we brought out a new evolution of Farm in a Box.

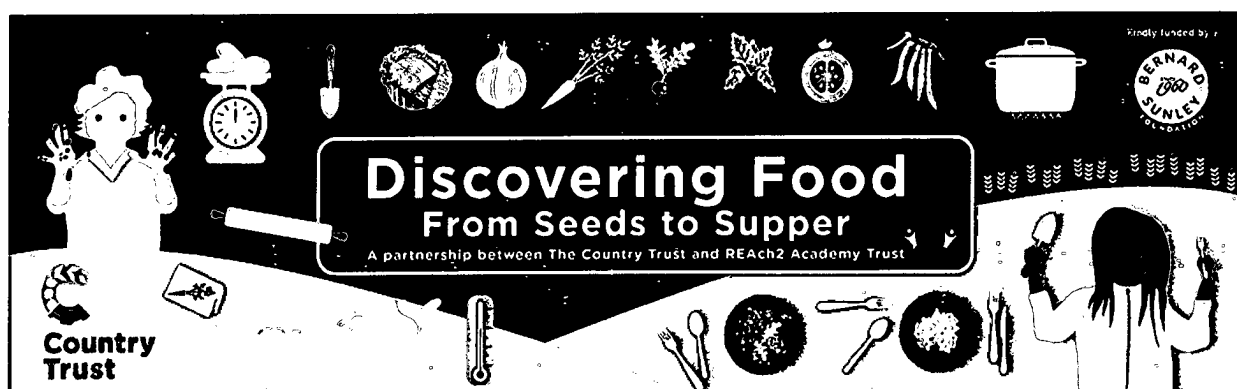
Farm in a Bag

Having seen how Farm in a Box increased children's curiosity, confidence and connection and increased the impact of a subsequent farm visit, we wanted to see whether we could develop a lower cost, re-useable, pre-visit activity that would still have significant impact. With funding from two Farming in Protected Landscapes funds (Lincolnshire Wolds AONB and Norfolk Broads AONB) we piloted Farm in a Bag. A re-useable bag of primarily sensory activities plus a short video, given to the teacher at the pre visit for use before the actual farm visit. Initial feedback is very encouraging and we are gradually accessing funding to equip more of our Coordinators with a set of bags.

Sustaining impact with Reach 2 Multi-Academy Trust

A brand-new programme of support just becoming available to teachers across 60 Reach2 academies with the aim of equipping and supporting teachers to take children on the 'seeds to supper' journey, one of the MAT's '11 before '11' promises for all their pupils.

Our aim is to then have a suite of resources to offer more widely, enabling teachers to sustain the impact of food and farm centred activities.



Plant Your Pants – our soil campaign

We wanted to find a way to enable children to make that first fundamental connection with the land that sustains us - getting their hands in the soil and discovering the life within it.

That's why we are asking families, schools, nurseries and farmers across the UK to bury a pair of cotton pants for a few months, and together, explore the world beneath our feet.

Burying pants is a technique that's been used by scientists the world over to engage people in the science of soil health. The healthier the soil, the more disintegrated the cotton pants will be once they are dug up.

It's a way that children can discover the life, both visible and invisible, in any patch of earth - from planters to parks, gardens, schools and farms. Our aim is to spark connection and curiosity along the way, guiding people how to look for signs of life, understand what it means and why it matters to each of us.

Plus we will be asking children to track their findings online and build up a picture of soil across the country. We are running the programme with scientists, teachers, parents and children involved at every stage.

Over time, we hope to build a nationwide understanding of the vital importance of soil and the role each of us can play in making our soil healthy.



Our policy work

The Country Trust is speaking up to ensure food, farming and countryside opportunities and experiences are available to ALL children, especially persistently disadvantaged children.

We know these opportunities offer the right balance of emotional, physical, social and educational development that benefit children and are vitally important for the future of British agriculture and for people and the planet to thrive. We are calling for:

- Every child to have the opportunity to visit a real working farm, to discover through first-hand experience where their food comes from
- Every child to have the chance to discover the connections between the food they eat, their own health and the health of the planet
- Every child to develop the confidence and curiosity to explore the natural world

Support for farmers

Over the past year we have been working hard to ensure as many farmers as possible are financially rewarded for opening their farms for educational visits. And we have had some success.

Through our efforts, Educational Access Payments (ED1) were added to Mid-Tier Countryside Stewardship agreements. Our challenge continues to be to ensure such payments continue when the new Environmental Land Management scheme is rolled out in 2024 and there are at last some positive signs. We will continue to speak up to ensure this becomes a reality.

We are also backing the call for support for farms under 5 hectares on urban fringes, not least because they are so well placed to provide opportunities for children from large urban areas.

With fuel costs so high, it is more important than ever that farms that are accessible by public transport, or are within walking distance of the schools we work with, are encouraged to open their gates for educational access visits.

Food and Farm Education for all

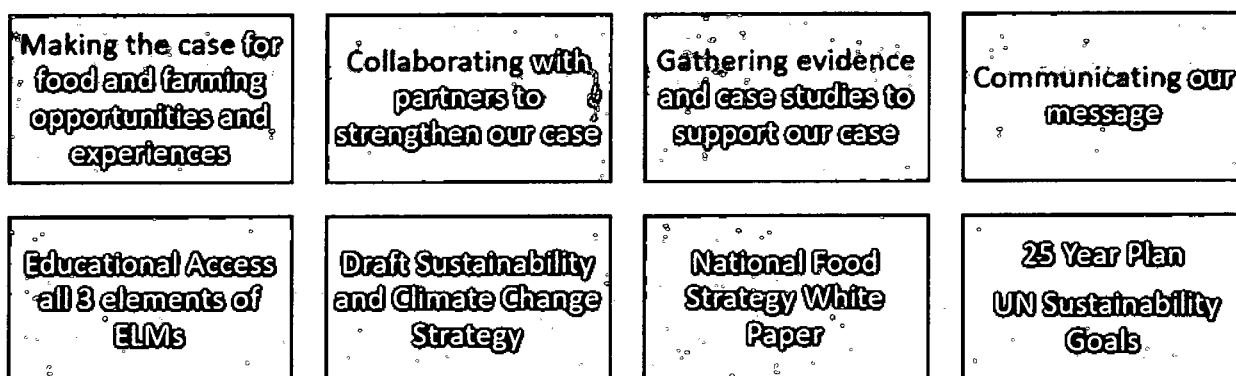
As well as ensuring there is adequate support from government for farmers, we are pushing for better and more food and agriculture education. An important part of this is backing the 'Eat and Learn' recommendations in the National Food Strategy.

We are asking Government to work across departments to ensure we achieve the much-needed shift in food culture to create a sustainable, resilient food system that supports people to live healthy lives. We believe this starts with first-hand experience of farming and food production.

Our ambition is to establish food, farming, and countryside opportunities as part of a fair education for all children, ensuring no child's future is limited by their socio-economic background. That's why we support the call for a Nature Premium, a government funded, statutory requirement for schools to take children regularly into nature.

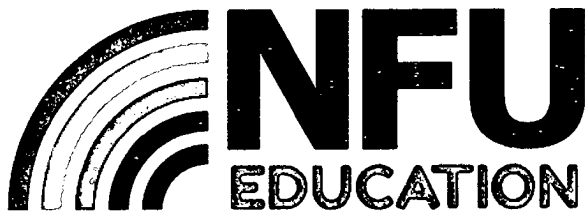
And it's why we play an active role in the Fair Education Alliance. We have introduced Kim McGowan Smith to both the Food Education Network and the Fair Education Alliance and think her work on food literacy provides an excellent framework to work with.

Speaking out...



Working in partnership

Amplifying our message and strengthening the case for support



LANDAPP

sustain



Social Farms & Gardens



LINKING ENVIRONMENT AND FARMING





Strategic direction

Our 5 Year Plan

In 2022 we launched a new 5 Year Plan, the first year of which coincided with schools, children, farmers, supporters, government and our workforce emerging from Covid, plus the increasing ‘bite’ of the cost-of-living crisis.

The 5 pillars of the Plan are:

- **Growth:** Significantly increase engagement to 120,000 children per annum by year 5
- **Diversification:** Finding new ways to deliver quality programmes at scale, ourselves, or with and through others. Supporting teachers to sustain the impact of our work and farmers to engage in farm education
- **Influence:** Focussing our effort to influence policies that support our mission in food, farming, and education
- **Impact and Evaluation:** A new Impact Framework including our Theory of Change will enable us to measure and share the difference we make. We will build academically robust evidence for farm education too
- **Infrastructure:** Developing our team, knowledge, IT and resources to support growth and development

Next steps with our Strategic Plan

2023 is year 2 of our 5 Year Plan.

With the help of all our supporters our aim is:

- Ensuring that our foundations of income, technology, leadership, governance, financial and information management underpin our progress
- 60,000 children taking part in our core programmes
- 10,000 children get their hands in the soil through our new Soil Campaign and in soil/photosynthesis focused farm visits
- Progress in making our Farm in a Box National boxes more regularly available
- Wider use of Farm in a Bag - a confidence building pre-visit encounter with farming
- Evidence that we are reaching children in the most disadvantaged areas
- Evidence that we are consistently achieving our outcomes
- New techniques to support teachers to sustain the impact of our programmes including a new partnership with Reach2 Multi Academy Trust
- Ensuring that the importance of food and farming education is seen and heard by policy makers

Strategic direction

Reimagining Residentials

In 2021 we laid out our plans to reimagine residentials and started to implement some of the ideas. 2022 was our first full residential season after the pandemic and it provided an opportunity to assess the changes we had made so far, for example to our Suffolk based programme, and the introduction of a parent video in Yorkshire.

We also reviewed our plans in the light of the significant impact Covid has had on the children, their families and their teachers, and were reassured to find that the reimagining we had done aligned well with the needs we were now seeing. However, the need for more time and resource to develop our plans was clear. The Ernest Cook OWL collaboration, and a small development charge to each school has freed up this time and capacity for 2023. Our plans are as follows:

- A fully rewritten teachers' handbook and a move to providing all our documentation online.
- Documents and resources to support parents and teachers. These include widget kit lists and timetables, a powerpoint presentation which can be shared online or at a parent meeting, pre and post visit lesson plans, a curriculum map and a document for parents which we will be translating via audio and text into Urdu, Bengali and Polish.
- New cooking and tasting sessions at all sites.
- A residential in a box.

Some of the above work will be shared with the OWL collaboration to be used by 10 other residential programmes across the UK who are providing residentials for disadvantaged children thanks to funding from The Ernest Cook Trust.

In addition, we are also looking at how we further support schools (and parents) who face significantly increased financial challenges.



Income increased by 21.5% and expenditure increased by 44.5% in comparison to 2021 (to £1,206,639 and £1,397,117) The net outcome was as expected though actual figures were lower than budgeted. 45% of our income was unrestricted. £339,786 of income received in 2022 was deferred to 2023 because it relates to the planned delivery of activity in the spring and summer terms.

The planned deficit enabled us to begin to use our reserves (fundamentally comprised of legacy income) in support of our 5 Year Plan. Our reserves position gave us the confidence and the capacity to:

- Sustain and grow our team of self-employed contractors a little, delivering more farm visits than pre-Covid in line with our 5 Year Plan
- Continue to offer Farm in a Box to schools in preparation for their farm visit, or as an alternative when visits were cancelled at short notice as a result of illness, staff shortages etc...
- Offer more transport subsidies than ever before where the cost of coach travel was a barrier to participation.
- Continue to innovate around Farm in a Box
- Develop our Soil Health Campaign
- Continue to review our existing programmes and train the team to ensure we kept pace with the needs of teachers and children.
- Grow our fundraising team



Controls

Financial management consists of monthly management accounts that are distributed to all Trustees for review.

Monthly forecasting enables Trustees to view the financial landscape ahead along with a mid-year review and detailed consideration in the third quarter prior to preparing the budget for the following year.

CEO or Trustee authorisation is required for all payments; all payments made by the Charity over £5,000 require dual authorisation with an authorised Trustee signatory. The charity had a successful Independent Examination (IE) in 2021 but is required to have an audit for 2022 as our income is over £1m.

Reserves policy

Trustees operate a RAG approach to assessing reserves with a green zone at around 3 months of operating reserves.

Based on our expenditure budget for 2023 this would indicate a reserves level of approximately £431,904. In 2022, overall reserves decreased from £772,718 to £582,240, of which unrestricted reserves decreased from £686,314 to £559,034, as a result of a planned use of reserves for our 5 Year Plan.

Our plans will result in a deficit again in 2023, but we have mechanisms in place to reduce the deficit should our monitoring indicate any cause for concern and our intention is of course to return to at least a break-even budget.

The Board has adopted the Charity Governance Code and is working through the seven principles to ensure good governance.

Legal and ethical fundraising remains a key objective of the Trustees, and they take their responsibilities with regard to proper fundraising practice very seriously.

They are guided by the *Charity Commission's Charity fundraising: a guide to trustee duties* (CC20 updated Oct 2022) as well as the *Charity Governance Code* (updated 2020), and the *Guidance Note from the Fundraising Regulator on New Reporting Requirements* published October 2018 and updated January 2023, and the *Covid fundraising guidance* issued during 2021. The Country Trust is registered with the Fundraising Regulator and complies with the Code of Fundraising Practice.

In 2022, approximately 66% of our income came from charitable trusts and foundations, 19.6% from donations including companies, 8% from service users - primarily schools in the form of the balance of the cost of residential visits after our subsidy has been applied, or as a contribution from schools towards the cost of Food Discovery programmes, 6.5% from donated services and gifts in kind.

Donors to The Country Trust can be assured that:

- Fundraising activity is included within the Trust's Risk Register, which is reviewed at each Board meeting; a senior member of staff directly involved with fundraising is present at every Board meeting.
- The Charity does not currently make use of professional fundraisers or commercial participators.
- The Charity complies with the Fundraising Regulator's voluntary regulation scheme.
- All fundraising is carried out by employed staff, managed by the CEO or Senior Managers who report to the CEO, or very occasionally by named volunteers working closely with the employed staff on our behalf, primarily networking with peers and friends. Some volunteers will fundraise in aid of The Country Trust and the Charity provides support for them on its website.

- The Charity did not receive any complaints about fundraising activities carried out by The Charity or someone acting on The Charity's behalf. We will be ensuring that our current website refresh includes raising the visibility of how to complain.
- The Charity respects the privacy of the public, including the need to take special care with vulnerable people. Any mailing or emailing for fundraising purposes is in accordance with GDPR preferences. Public fundraising is through online fundraising platforms, or through static collection goblets and is carried out in accordance with the Code of Fundraising Practice. The Charity undertakes very little face to face fundraising and what is done is events based and primarily by invitation.

The Charity will comply with requests issued by the Fundraising Preference Service. The Charity strives to maintain GDPR compliance and has registered with the ICO.



Principal funding sources

As described above the Charity continues to derive most of its funding from grant making trusts, but with a growing number of companies now supporting our work. We continued to sustain a good percentage of funding within multi-year agreements.

We are very grateful indeed for the support received from all our funders, and mention here those who have given permission for their support to be acknowledged in this report:

Aldgate and Allhallows Foundation, Ardian UK and the Ardian Foundation, Britains Farm Toys, Bruno Schroder Trust, The CLA Charitable Trust, Lance Coates Charitable Trust, Ernest Cook Trust, Doves Farm, Frontier Agriculture UK, The Girdlers' Company, WA Handley Trust, The Hiscox Foundation, A Hume Country Clothing and Outfitters, Impax Asset Management, The Joicey Trust, Sir James Knott Trust, John Lewis Golden Jubilee Trust, The Lund Trust, The Mercers' Company, Muckle LLP Community Fund, Oxbury Bank, The Rank Foundation, Riverford Organic Foods, The Rothschild Foundation, Royal Society of Chemistry, The Shears Foundation, Soreen, The Bernard Sunley Charitable Foundation, Felix Thornley Cobbold Agricultural Trust, Tyne and Wear Community Foundation, Warburtons Ltd, Westminster Foundation, The Garfield Weston Foundation, The Wheler Foundation.

We were delighted to be able to work with two of our very generous supporters to hold two face to face fundraising events in London to introduce our work to new supporters. The Trustees would like to particularly thank those Foundations who have provided additional cost of living grants in recognition of the challenges charities and their beneficiaries are facing.

Thanks are also due to the Charity's President and Vice Presidents for their support in identifying and making introductions to potential new funding sources.

Transport costs

Requests for transport subsidies continued to rise in 2022 from schools in the area hardest hit by Covid, and then the cost-of-living crisis. Nearly £23,000 of subsidies were given out enabling over 3,000 children to access farms.



Structure, Governance and Management

Structure

The Country Trust was founded in 1978 and is registered with the Charity Commission under Charity Number 1122103. The Board of Trustees, President, Board of Vice Presidents, Chief Executive Officer and professional advisers are listed on page 2.

On the 23rd November 2007 the Country Trust was incorporated; it became a company limited by guarantee and not having share capital. On the 1st January 2008, the Charity commenced trading as an incorporated Charity. The Company number is 6436266 and the registered address is shown on page 1.

Governing document

The Charity is governed by the Memorandum and Articles of Association of the Country Trust Ltd.

Governing Body

The structure of the Charity consists of a Board of Trustees and a Chief Executive supported by a Senior Leadership Team. The Board of Trustees is a self-appointing body and includes a good gender balance and a range of experience.

Several Trustees have direct experience of our services either as teachers or active farmer hosts. Trustees with the relevant experience have particular responsibility for Finance and Safeguarding.

The Chief Executive reports directly to the Chair of Trustees and is responsible for the day-to-day running of the Charity. The Charity is very fortunate to be supported by a President and Vice Presidents who are an advisory, networking and fundraising resource.

Recruitment and training of Trustees

Trustees are recruited as and when required through advertising, personal recommendation and through the recommendation of third-party advisors according to the Board's specifications concerning eligibility, personal competence, and specialist skills. Potential candidates are invited to apply and are interviewed by the Chair and at least one other Trustee.

Successful applicants are co-opted to join the Board until their appointment is confirmed. Four new Trustees were appointed and two stepped down during the year. Five Trustees, including all our new Trustees, undertook governance training with Hempsons on Finance, Governance and Legal Duties.

One Trustee undertook an additional safeguarding related training course and two existing Trustees undertook Trustee training with Stone King.

Organisational management

The Charity's Trustees are legally responsible for the overall management and control of the Charity. The Board of Trustees meets at least four times a year to discuss and implement strategic issues, monitor income and expenditure, monitor risk, review and approve policies and approve annual budgets.

The day to day running of the Charity is delegated to the Chief Executive, the Senior Leadership Team, staff and sessional staff, who report to the Board monthly and quarterly.

Structure, Governance and Management

Risk management

The Board of Trustees is responsible for the management of risks associated with the activities of the Charity. The Board refers to the Charity's Risk Register at each meeting which is prepared and updated by the Chief Executive.

The top 6 major risks identified and monitored in 2022 were:

- **Inadequate fundraising** - mitigated by: Annual budgets include risk analysis, monthly financial reports show progress against budget, 'new' spend is brought to the Board, detailed Mid-Year Review, active communication with our funders, new product development.
- **Public Health Emergency** - mitigated by: Continued close monitoring of Government guidance, regular reviews of our health and safety and safeguarding guidance and training of our delivery team, open channels of communication with teachers and farmers.
- **Education Funding cuts** - mitigated by: Continued focus on measuring and reporting on the relevance of our work including a new Impact Framework, working to influence policy, adapting our fundraising, offering Farm in a Box as an alternative.
- **Poor governance by the Board** - mitigated by: Regular Board meetings, sub committees for finance and strategy, key decisions checked with external professionals eg insurers, accountants, funders.
- **Dependency on individual knowledge and relationships** - (employed) key areas of vulnerability fundraising, IT, H and S, Digital - mitigated by: IT assistant supported to do an apprenticeship degree, Digital assistant recruited through Time to Shine, H and S 'how to' guides prioritised, increased fundraising capacity, greater visibility of key fundraising information.
- **Impact of world events** - mitigated by: Looking for sustainable travel options, raising funds for travel subsidies, supporting the Sustain/LWA campaign for grants for small, peri-urban growers, working with refugee groups, 5% rise for the majority of the team, monitoring the impact of the cost of living on our team, surveying teachers to understand their situation, a new programme focused on supporting teachers to sustain impact.

Risk Assessments are prepared by staff and self-employed sessional contractors for all activities led by the Charity. Following recommendations arising from our regular reviews of Health and Safety, the Charity now ensures that all our active host farmers have a Risk Assessment in place for Country Trust visits. These Risk Assessments are prepared, owned and managed by the host farmer but where required, support for the process, including signposting to external industry guidance, is provided by the Charity. The Charity receives the help of professional advisors for risks associated with health and safety, safeguarding and employment practice.

The Board of Trustees also has in place key controls for use by the Charity, such as formal agendas for meetings, comprehensive strategic planning and monthly management accounting, established lines of reporting, formal written policies and a review schedule, clear authorisation levels for all payments and a safeguarding policy which provides guidance for all on best safe practice for adults within an organisation working with children.



Structure, Governance and Management

Openness and accountability

We strive to involve participants in programme design and the comprehensive feedback gathered from stakeholders during the year is constantly used to inform practice. Our annual evaluation reports are published online and publicised through social media and printed materials.

We were very pleased to make progress in listening to children's voices through the implementation of an online pupil survey sent to teachers after each farm visit. Levels of participation are encouraging. A number of case studies were also completed by our Learning and Evaluation Lead.



This is our Position Statement:

The Country Trust connects children with the land that sustains us all. We aim to foster an understanding of farming, food production and countryside management in all its many guises and raise awareness of the way in which we are all participants in agriculture through the food that we eat.

Country Trust visits and activities are structured to support the National Curriculum, personal development and wellbeing. Our carefully planned opportunities and experiences are designed to empower children to be curious, confident and create change in their lives and the world around them so that they and society can thrive.

We do not consider ourselves to be a charity that campaigns for or against any particular form of farming or land management. However:

- We do seek to influence policy makers where this makes it more likely that we will achieve our mission. For example, for educational access to farms to be supported as a standalone public good, and for food and farming education to be a vital part of education, health, wellbeing, sustainability and food strategies.
- In the context of the climate emergency and rapid loss of biodiversity, we design our programmes to help children to understand the unique responsibilities that farmers and land managers have for soil health and biodiversity, stewardship of non-renewable resources and locking up carbon.

Our intention is that children will be in a better position to make informed decisions, understanding that their choices matter, and may be influential in the future shape of farming and the countryside.

Structure, Governance and Management

GDPR

We use our database to extend our compliance with the GDPR regulations - subscription to Newsletters allows for double opt in as well as providing the usual ability to unsubscribe.

Cybersecurity

The Country Trust continues to be vigilant with regard to Cybersecurity. All CT staff are required to complete annual training as part of our Cyber insurance obligations.

We continue to use the NCSC's (National Cyber Security Centre) monitoring tools. Continued vigilance meant that there were no serious issues in 2022.



Safeguarding

Government guidance is clear that all organisations working with children, young people, families, parents and carers have particular responsibilities. At The Country Trust we recognise that the welfare of all children is paramount and that all children, regardless of ability or culture, have equal rights of protection.

We have a duty of care when they are in our charge, and we will do everything we can to provide a safe and caring environment whilst they attend our activities.

Our policy for child safeguarding is on our website and is reviewed annually by our Board of Trustees. The Country Trust is a member of SAFEcic, an umbrella organisation providing safeguarding training, advice and standards. All staff, volunteers and Trustees undertake safeguarding training and undergo DBS checks where this is permitted for their role.

Safeguarding is reviewed at the quarterly Board meetings. There were 8 safeguarding concerns raised within 2022 including disclosures by children and parents and potential signs of neglect and abuse observed in children, and one in relation to our own practice.

All were followed through in accordance with our Policy. Trustees have continued to keep their safeguarding training up to date and keep abreast of any significant changes.

Structure, Governance and Management

Health and Safety

Our health and safety policy can be found on our website and is reviewed every two years. Following the last review, and a review of our policy in practice undertaken by Trustees, we strengthened our practice through making it a requirement that every active farmer host has an up-to-date Risk Assessment.

Safeguarding, and Health and Safety reports of all disclosures, accidents, incidents and near misses and subsequent actions taken are brought to every Board meeting, preserving the appropriate confidentiality. Health and Safety briefings are issued to the whole team at key moments in the farming calendar (eg lambing), whenever there is a learning or update to be shared and are integrated into new programmes (eg Farm in a Box). H and S training is made available in written and video form and engagement is tracked.

Pre-visits to farms are mandatory for schools (with very limited exceptions) in order that proper planning can be undertaken including understanding the particular needs of the children.

The Trustees would like to thank everyone involved with The Country Trust - farmers, teachers, funders, our delivery team, staff, volunteers and everyone who has provided incredible support and encouragement during another challenging year.

Statement of compliance with prevailing laws and regulations

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in notes to the accounts and comply with the charity's governing document, the Charities Act 2011 and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland published in October 2019.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies entitled to the small companies' exemption.

Approved by the Board of Trustees on 19 June 2023

Signed on its behalf by S D Bell
Steve Bell, Chair of Trustees

Accounts



The Country Trust

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of The Country Trust

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of The Country Trust (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 December 2022, which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, Balance Sheet, Statement of Cash Flows, and Notes to the Financial Statements, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 December 2022 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the auditor responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the original financial statements were authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the Trustees' Report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the Trustees' Report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

The Country Trust

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of The Country Trust

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinion on other matter prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the Trustees' Report (incorporating the Directors' Report) for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the Directors' Report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of our knowledge and understanding of the company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Trustees' Report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of directors' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.
- the trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the Directors' Report and from the requirement to prepare a Strategic Report.

Other matter

The prior year financial statements are unaudited because the total income in the prior year was below the audit requirement threshold.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the (set out on page), the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

The Country Trust

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of The Country Trust

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

Our approach to identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, was as follows;

- The engagement partner ensured that the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
- We focused on specific laws and regulations which we considered may have a direct material effect on the financial statements or the operations for the company, including the Companies Act 2006, Charities Act 2011, tax legislation and data protection, and employment legislation.

We assessed the susceptibility of the company's financial statements to material misstatement, including obtaining an understanding of how fraud might occur by;

- Making enquiries of management as to where they considered there was susceptibility to fraud, their knowledge of actual, suspected and alleged fraud.
- Considered the internal controls in place to mitigate the risks of fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations.

To address the risk of fraud through management bias and override of controls, we:

- Performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships.
- Tested journal entries to identify unusual transactions.

In response to the risk of irregularities and non-compliance with laws and regulations, we designed procedures which included, but were not limited to:

- Agreeing financial statement disclosures to underlying supporting documentation.
- Reading the minutes of meetings of those charged with governance.
- Enquiring of management as to actual and potential litigation and claims.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

As part of an audit in accordance with ISAs (UK), we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
-

The Country Trust

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of The Country Trust

-
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the charitable company's internal control.
 - Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the trustees.
 - Conclude on the appropriateness of the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the charitable company to cease to continue as a going concern.
 - Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's trustees, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and its trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

C A Barker

Colin Andrew Barker FCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)
For and on behalf of Edmund Carr LLP, Statutory Auditor

146 New London Road
Chelmsford
Essex
CM2 0AW

Date: 23 June 2023

The Country Trust

Statement of Financial Activities for the Year Ended 31 December 2022 (Including Income and Expenditure Account and Other Comprehensive Income)

	Note	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2022 £	Total 2021 £
Income and Endowments from:					
Donations and legacies	3	540,916	567,208	1,108,124	951,877
Charitable activities	4	-	95,056	95,056	40,532
Investment income	5	3,259	-	3,259	118
Other income		-	200	200	-
Total income		<u>544,175</u>	<u>662,464</u>	<u>1,206,639</u>	<u>992,527</u>
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds		107,475	-	107,475	80,274
Charitable activities	6	<u>470,817</u>	<u>818,825</u>	<u>1,289,642</u>	<u>886,676</u>
Total expenditure		<u>578,292</u>	<u>818,825</u>	<u>1,397,117</u>	<u>966,950</u>
Net (expenditure)/income		(34,117)	(156,361)	(190,478)	25,577
Transfers between funds		<u>(93,163)</u>	<u>93,163</u>	-	-
Net movement in funds		(127,280)	(63,198)	(190,478)	25,577
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		<u>686,314</u>	<u>86,404</u>	<u>772,718</u>	<u>747,141</u>
Total funds carried forward	16	<u>559,034</u>	<u>23,206</u>	<u>582,240</u>	<u>772,718</u>

All of the charitable company's activities derive from continuing operations during the above two periods.

The Country Trust

(Registration number: 6436266)
Balance Sheet as at 31 December 2022

	Note	2022 £	2021 £
Fixed assets	12	5,258	4
Current assets			
Debtors	13	124,856	22
Cash at bank and in hand	14	856,882	1,016
		981,738	1,041
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	15	(404,756)	(273)
Net current assets		576,982	768
Net assets		582,240	772
Funds of the charitable company:			
Restricted		23,206	86
Unrestricted funds			
General funds		559,034	686
Total funds	16	582,240	772

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions relating to companies subject to the small companies regime within Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006.

The financial statements on pages 67 to 83 were approved by the trustees and authorised for issue on 19 June and signed on their behalf by:

S D Bell

S D Bell BA (Hons)
Trustee

The Country Trust

Statement of Cash Flows for the Year Ended 31 December 2022

	Note	2022 £	2021 £
Cash flows from operating activities			
Net movement in funds per SOFA		(190,478)	25,577
Adjustments			
Depreciation		1,459	1,400
Investment income	5	<u>(3,259)</u>	<u>(118)</u>
		(192,278)	26,859
Working capital adjustments			
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	13	(99,868)	4,996
Increase in creditors	15	23,977	9,785
Increase/(decrease) in deferred income		<u>106,952</u>	<u>(304,867)</u>
Net cash flows from operating activities		<u>(161,217)</u>	<u>(263,227)</u>
Cash flows from investing activities			
Interest receivable and similar income	5	3,259	118
Purchase of tangible fixed assets	12	<u>(1,779)</u>	<u>(2,578)</u>
Net cash flows from investing activities		<u>1,480</u>	<u>(2,460)</u>
Net decrease in cash and cash equivalents		(159,737)	(265,687)
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 January		<u>1,016,619</u>	<u>1,282,306</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at 31 December		<u><u>856,882</u></u>	<u><u>1,016,619</u></u>

All of the cash flows are derived from continuing operations during the above two periods.

The Country Trust

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2022

1 Charitable company status

The charitable company is limited by guarantee, incorporated in England & Wales, and consequently does not have share capital. Each of the trustees is liable to contribute an amount not exceeding £1 towards the assets of the charitable company in the event of liquidation.

2 Accounting policies

Summary of significant accounting policies and key accounting estimates

The principal accounting policies applied in the preparation of these financial statements are set out below. These policies have been consistently applied to all the years presented, unless otherwise stated.

Statement of compliance

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice (applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)) (issued in October 2019) - (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Basis of preparation

The Country Trust meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy notes.

Going concern

The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern nor any significant areas of uncertainty that affect the carrying value of assets held by the charitable company.

Income and endowments

All income is recognised once the charitable company has entitlement to the income, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount of the income receivable can be measured reliably.

Donations and legacies

All donated income and grants receivable are included in income on receipt except where the donor requires that the sum is to be treated as income in future accounting periods, in which case it is deferred. Where a donor has specified that a donation should be used for a particular purpose this is treated as restricted income.

Grants receivable

Grants are recognised when the charitable company has an entitlement to the funds and any conditions linked to the grants have been met. Where performance conditions are attached to the grant and are yet to be met, the income is recognised as a liability and included on the balance sheet as deferred income to be released.

The Country Trust

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2022

Deferred income

Deferred income represents grants and service fees received in respect of visits and activities taking place after the year end. It also represents unrestricted income where that income relates to future periods.

Donated services and facilities

Where services or facilities are provided to the charitable company as a donation that would normally be purchased from our suppliers, this benefit is included in the financial statements at its fair value unless its fair value cannot be reliably measured, then at the cost to the donor or the resale value of goods that are to be sold.

Investment income

Interest received is accounted for when the interest is credited on the Bank deposit accounts.

Charitable activities

Income from charitable activities arises from educational visits and activities where schools or other partners fund all or a proportion of the costs incurred.

Expenditure

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and includes VAT as the charity is not VAT registered. Governance costs are associated with the governance arrangements of the charity. Where expenditure is apportioned between charitable activities and support costs, this is done based on the portion that is applicable to the direct provision of educational visits and activities or the administration of the charity. In the case of staff costs, this is based on the time spent on charitable activities or administration.

Raising funds

These are costs incurred in attracting voluntary income, the management of investments and those incurred in trading activities that raise funds.

Charitable activities

Charitable activities comprise costs incurred in carrying out educational visits and activities to farms, estates and the wider countryside, and in schools.

Governance costs

These include the costs attributable to the charitable company's compliance with constitutional and statutory requirements, including audit, strategic management and trustees meetings and reimbursed expenses.

Taxation

The charitable company is considered to pass the tests set out in Paragraph 1 Schedule 6 of the Finance Act 2010 and therefore it meets the definition of a charitable company for UK corporation tax purposes. Accordingly, the charitable company is potentially exempt from taxation in respect of income or capital gains received within categories covered by Chapter 3 Part 11 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 or Section 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992, to the extent that such income or gains are applied exclusively to charitable purposes.

The Country Trust

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2022

Tangible fixed assets

Individual fixed assets costing a significant amount are initially recorded at cost, less any subsequent accumulated depreciation and subsequent accumulated impairment losses.

Depreciation and amortisation

Depreciation is provided on tangible fixed assets so as to write off the cost or valuation, less any estimated residual value, over their expected useful economic life as follows:

Asset class	Depreciation method and rate
Office equipment & software	25% reducing balance

Trade debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due.

Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents comprise cash on hand and call deposits, and other short-term highly liquid investments that are readily convertible to a known amount of cash and are subject to an insignificant risk of change in value.

Trade creditors

Creditors are recognised at their settlement amount.

Fund structure

Unrestricted income funds are general funds that are available for use at the trustees's discretion in furtherance of the objectives of the charitable company.

Designated funds are funds set aside by the trustees out of unrestricted funds for specific future purposes or projects.

Restricted income funds are those donated or received for use in a particular area or for specific purposes, the use of which is restricted to that area or purpose.

Pensions and other post retirement obligations

The charitable company operates a defined contribution pension scheme which is a pension plan under which fixed contributions are paid into a pension fund and the charitable company has no legal or constructive obligation to pay further contributions even if the fund does not hold sufficient assets to pay all employees the benefits relating to employee service in the current and prior periods.

Contributions to defined contribution plans are recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities when they are due. If contribution payments exceed the contribution due for service, the excess is recognised as a prepayment.

The Country Trust

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2022

Financial instruments

Classification

The charitable company only holds basic financial instruments as defined in FRS 102. The financial assets and financial liabilities of the charitable company and their measurement basis are as follows:

Financial assets - trade and other debtors are basic financial instruments and are debt instruments measured at amortised cost. Prepayments are not financial instruments.

Cash at bank - is classified as a basic financial instrument and is measured at face value.

Financial liabilities - trade creditors, accruals and other creditors are financial instruments, and are measured at amortised cost. Taxation and social security are not included in the financial instruments disclosure definition. Deferred income is not deemed to be a financial liability, as the cash settlement has already taken place and there is an obligation to deliver services rather than cash or another financial instrument.

3 Income from donations and legacies

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2022 £
Donations	65,056	171,826	236,882
Charitable Trusts and grant making bodies	403,810	389,382	793,192
Donated services and gifts in kind	72,050	6,000	78,050
	540,916	567,208	1,108,124
	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2021 £
Donations	63,695	49,669	113,364
Legacies	96,000	-	96,000
Charitable Trusts and grant making bodies	340,368	401,510	741,878
Job retention scheme grant	635	-	635
	500,698	451,179	951,877

The Country Trust

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2022

4 Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2022 £
Countryside Discovery Residential Visits	-	87,080	87,080
Food Discovery	-	7,616	7,616
Farm Visits	-	360	360
	<u>-</u>	<u>95,056</u>	<u>95,056</u>
	<u>-</u>	<u>95,056</u>	<u>95,056</u>
	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2021 £
Countryside Discovery Residential Visits	-	31,332	31,332
Food Discovery	-	4,200	4,200
Farm Visits	-	5,000	5,000
	<u>-</u>	<u>40,532</u>	<u>40,532</u>
	<u>-</u>	<u>40,532</u>	<u>40,532</u>

5 Investment income

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2022 £
Interest receivable on bank deposits	3,259	-	3,259
	<u>3,259</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>3,259</u>
	<u>3,259</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>3,259</u>
	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2021 £
Interest receivable on bank deposits	118	-	118
	<u>118</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>118</u>
	<u>118</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>118</u>

The Country Trust

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2022

6 Expenditure on charitable activities

	Activity undertaken directly £	Activity support costs £	2022 £
Countryside Discovery Residential Visits	153,327	84,474	237,801
Food Discovery	148,363	81,739	230,102
Farm Visits	393,213	222,637	615,850
Farm in a Box	117,922	87,967	205,889
	<u>812,825</u>	<u>476,817</u>	<u>1,289,642</u>
	Activity undertaken directly £	Activity support costs £	2021 £
Countryside Discovery Residential Visits	87,439	45,282	132,721
Food Discovery	75,018	39,598	114,616
Farm Visits	419,153	220,186	639,339
	<u>581,610</u>	<u>305,066</u>	<u>886,676</u>

The expenditure analysed above includes governance costs of £6,000 (2021 - £3,530) which relate directly to charitable activities. See note 7 for further details.

This year, £470,817 (2021: £386,412) of charitable activity expenditure was unrestricted and £818,825 (2021: £500,234) was restricted.

The Country Trust

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2022

7 Analysis of governance and support costs

Support costs allocated to charitable activities

	Governance costs £	Staff costs £	Administration costs £	Total 2022 £
Countryside Discovery Residential Visits	1,131	35,977	47,366	84,474
Food Discovery	1,095	34,814	45,830	81,739
Farm Visits	2,903	92,290	127,444	222,637
Farm in a Box	871	27,679	59,417	87,967
	<u>6,000</u>	<u>190,760</u>	<u>280,057</u>	<u>476,817</u>

	Governance costs £	Staff costs £	Administration costs £	Total 2021 £
Countryside Discovery Residential Visits	531	32,244	12,507	45,282
Food Discovery	455	27,674	11,469	39,598
Farm Visits	2,544	154,613	63,029	220,186
	<u>3,530</u>	<u>214,531</u>	<u>87,005</u>	<u>305,066</u>

Governance costs

	Total 2022 £	Total 2021 £
Audit fees		
Audit of the financial statements	4,000	-
Other fees paid to auditors	2,000	-
Independent examiner fees		
Examination of the financial statements	-	1,600
Other fees paid to examiners	-	1,930
	<u>6,000</u>	<u>3,530</u>

The Country Trust

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2022

8 Net incoming/outgoing resources

Net (outgoing)/incoming resources for the year include:

	2022 £	2021 £
Fees payable to auditor	6,000	-
Fees payable to independent examiner	-	3,530
Depreciation of fixed assets	<u>1,459</u>	<u>1,401</u>

9 Trustees remuneration and expenses

No trustees, nor any persons connected with them, have received any remuneration from the charitable company during the year.

No trustees have received any other benefits from the charity during the year.

During the year, 1 trustee was reimbursed for reasonable travel expenses of £107 (2021: no expenses reimbursed).

10 Staff costs

The aggregate payroll costs were as follows:

	2022 £	2021 £
Staff costs during the year were:		
Wages and salaries	317,724	254,141
Social security costs	25,716	17,710
Pension costs	7,201	5,442
Other staff costs	<u>39,550</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>390,191</u>	<u>277,293</u>

The monthly average number of persons (including senior management team) employed by the charitable company during the year expressed by head count was as follows:

	2022 No	2021 No
Charitable activities	2	1
Support and administration	<u>9</u>	<u>9</u>
	<u>11</u>	<u>10</u>

The average number of persons employed by the charity during the year expressed as full time equivalents was 10.2 (2021: 7.1).

The Country Trust

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2022

11 (2021 - 10) of the above employees participated in the Defined Contribution Pension Schemes.

The number of employees whose emoluments fell within the following bands was:

	2022 No	2021 No
£60,001 - £70,000	<u>1</u>	<u>-</u>

The total employee benefits of the key management personnel of the charitable company were £69,920 (2021 - £67,634).

11 Taxation

The charitable company is a registered charity and is therefore exempt from taxation.

12 Tangible fixed assets

	Office equipment & software £	Total £
Cost		
At 1 January 2022	12,474	12,474
Additions	<u>1,779</u>	<u>1,779</u>
At 31 December 2022	<u>14,253</u>	<u>14,253</u>
Depreciation		
At 1 January 2022	7,536	7,536
Charge for the year	<u>1,459</u>	<u>1,459</u>
At 31 December 2022	<u>8,995</u>	<u>8,995</u>
Net book value		
At 31 December 2022	<u>5,258</u>	<u>5,258</u>
At 31 December 2021	<u>4,938</u>	<u>4,938</u>

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Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2022

13 Debtors

	2022 £	2021 £
Trade debtors	103,119	1,100
Prepayments	21,737	23,809
Accrued income	-	79
	<u>124,856</u>	<u>24,988</u>

14 Cash and cash equivalents

	2022 £	2021 £
Cash at bank	<u>856,882</u>	<u>1,016,619</u>

15 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2022 £	2021 £
Trade creditors	47,841	22,508
Other taxation and social security	6,128	8,297
Other creditors	4,461	6,491
Accruals	6,540	3,697
Deferred income	<u>339,786</u>	<u>232,834</u>
	<u>404,756</u>	<u>273,827</u>

	2022 £	2021 £
Deferred income at 1 January 2022	232,834	537,701
Resources deferred in the period	339,786	225,061
Amounts released from previous periods	<u>(232,834)</u>	<u>(529,928)</u>
Deferred income at year end	<u>339,786</u>	<u>232,834</u>

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Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2022

16 Funds

Current year:

	Balance at 1 January 2022 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Transfers £	Balance at 31 December 2022 £
Unrestricted funds					
General	686,314	544,175	(578,292)	(93,163)	559,034
Restricted					
a) Residential	1,678	139,644	(153,328)	12,006	-
b) Food discovery	84,726	90,864	(148,362)	(6,000)	21,228
c) Farm visits	-	297,456	(393,213)	95,757	-
d) Farm in a Box	-	134,500	(123,922)	(8,600)	1,978
Total restricted	<u>86,404</u>	<u>662,464</u>	<u>(818,825)</u>	<u>93,163</u>	<u>23,206</u>
Total funds	<u>772,718</u>	<u>1,206,639</u>	<u>(1,397,117)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>582,240</u>

The specific purposes for which the funds are to be applied are as follows:

Restricted funds:

- a) Funds to subsidise the cost of Countryside Discovery Residential visits enabling disadvantaged primary age children to experience food, farming and the countryside.
- b) For teaching disadvantaged primary school children to grow & cook fresh produce, explore local farms, run playground markets & a harvest feast, and to train teachers in relevant elements of Learning Outside the Classroom.
- c) Funds relating to the provision of Farm and Countryside Discovery educational day visits bringing the working countryside to life for primary school children from disadvantaged areas, and now the Farm in a Box programme bringing farm centred, hands on, experiential learning into schools, groups and homes.
- d) This fund is to support children and educators so that they can have a farm-centred experience without leaving their school grounds or location.

The transfers from unrestricted funds is to eliminate restricted fund negative balances. Transfers from restricted funds represent a contribution to cover central support and administration.

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Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2022

Prior year:

	Balance at 1 January 2021 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Transfers £	Balance at 31 December 2021 £
Unrestricted funds					
General	577,076	500,816	(432,340)	40,762	686,314
Designated funds					
i) Risk assessment	10,000	-	(820)	(9,180)	-
ii) Corporate fundraiser	120,000	-	(20,200)	(99,800)	-
iii) Strategic planning and innovation	20,000	-	(13,326)	(6,674)	-
	<u>150,000</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(34,346)</u>	<u>(115,654)</u>	<u>-</u>
Total unrestricted funds	<u>727,076</u>	<u>500,816</u>	<u>(466,686)</u>	<u>(74,892)</u>	<u>686,314</u>
Restricted					
a) Residential	-	76,554	(73,355)	(1,521)	1,678
b) Food discovery	18,522	139,532	(63,681)	(9,647)	84,726
c) Farm visits	-	275,625	(363,228)	87,603	-
e) Country Trust Hampshire	1,543	-	-	(1,543)	-
Total restricted funds	<u>20,065</u>	<u>491,711</u>	<u>(500,264)</u>	<u>74,892</u>	<u>86,404</u>
Total funds	<u>747,141</u>	<u>992,527</u>	<u>(966,950)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>772,718</u>

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Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2022

17 Analysis of net assets between funds

Current year:

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds at 31/12/2022 £
Tangible fixed assets	5,258	-	5,258
Current assets	731,299	250,439	981,738
Current liabilities	<u>(177,523)</u>	<u>(227,233)</u>	<u>(404,756)</u>
Total net assets	<u>559,034</u>	<u>23,206</u>	<u>582,240</u>

Prior year:

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds at 31/12/2021 £
Tangible fixed assets	4,938	-	4,938
Current assets	753,207	288,400	1,041,607
Current liabilities	<u>(71,831)</u>	<u>(201,996)</u>	<u>(273,827)</u>
Total net assets	<u>686,314</u>	<u>86,404</u>	<u>772,718</u>

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Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2022

18 Prior year Statement of Financial Activities

	Note	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total 2021 £
Income and Endowments from:				
Donations and legacies	3	500,698	451,179	951,877
Charitable activities	4	-	40,532	40,532
Investment income	5	118	-	118
Total income		<u>500,816</u>	<u>491,711</u>	<u>992,527</u>
Expenditure on:				
Raising funds		80,274	-	80,274
Charitable activities	6	<u>386,412</u>	<u>500,264</u>	<u>886,676</u>
Total expenditure		<u>466,686</u>	<u>500,264</u>	<u>966,950</u>
Net income/(expenditure)		34,130	(8,553)	25,577
Transfers between funds		<u>(74,892)</u>	<u>74,892</u>	-
Net movement in funds		(40,762)	66,339	25,577
Reconciliation of funds				
Total funds brought forward		<u>727,076</u>	<u>20,065</u>	<u>747,141</u>
Total funds carried forward	16	<u><u>686,314</u></u>	<u><u>86,404</u></u>	<u><u>772,718</u></u>