

Annual Review 2025



Family photo, photo credit to Oliver Allan

Proud to be community-owned
1 farmer, 8,000 landlords





2025 Key Stats

11 community
land-based
projects
mentored

5 national
conferences invited
Charlotte to share
the Fordhall story



51
education
sessions delivered

716 children
partaking in a
worm dance

925 worms per square metre were
counted in House Field



190 individual
volunteers gave

2970
volunteer hours!



£21,139

raised towards River
Friendly Farming

1 cow bathing pool
created

1 bird hide built

1 pond dipping
platform extended



89 new
shareholders

8112 total
members





Chairperson's Report

As we embrace 20 years in community-ownership I have reflected on my own relationship with

Fordhall. My connection has been long and varied. I started with volunteering in the office and with working weekends prior to the purchase. I've been a Board Member from day one and been deeply involved with project work of repairing and renovating the farmhouse, renovating the farm buildings and building the Straw Lodge. I've also been a past Treasurer and today, I am the Chairman of the Board (my second year in this role – my sincerest thanks for giving me this opportunity yet again!).

When I look back on 2025, I find myself thinking less in terms of milestones and more in terms of how the year has felt. It's been a year of real momentum, but also one that has reminded me just how much care, resilience and collective effort sits behind everything we do at Fordhall.

From a Board perspective, I'm incredibly proud of the direction we've continued to travel in. There's a growing sense that what we've built here over the last 20 years isn't just working but actually starting to resonate more widely. The conversations we've had as a Board this year about our future, particularly around whether and how we might support more farms, have felt both exciting and slightly daunting. It comes with responsibility. But it also reflects a quiet confidence that the model we've all been part of creating really does have something to offer beyond Fordhall.

The standout moment for me this year has to be West Town Farm. When I think back to announcing it 'in principle' at last year's AGM, it still felt fairly abstract. Over the course of 2025, it has become something much more real. Getting to know Andy

and his team, beginning to understand the land, the community, and what it means to transition something so personal into community stewardship, it's been genuinely inspiring and there is still lots to learn. For me, it's one of those moments where you really see the bigger picture: this isn't just about Fordhall anymore, it's about what Fordhall has helped prove is possible.



Andy, Charlotte and Fordhall Board Members at West Town Farm, Sept 25

That said, the year hasn't been without its tougher moments. The small yurt fire was one of those. In practical terms, it disrupted part of our offering, and we felt that loss. But it was more than that – it was one of those moments that makes you stop and realise how much sits behind even the smaller parts of what we do. The way the team responded, calmly and pragmatically, and the fact we were able to recover and reopen, speaks volumes about the strength of the organisation. It also reminded me we can't take any of it for granted.

What I've perhaps appreciated most this year is the consistency of the quieter work. The hundreds of children coming through the farm, the Youth Project getting stuck into conservation, the Care Farm members growing and sharing food, the simple moments of people connecting with the land. These don't always make headlines, but they are the real substance of Fordhall

and the reason we exist.



At Board level, we've continued to focus on making sure that, as we grow, we don't lose sight of our responsibilities around governance, transparency and careful management of risk. I think we've struck that balance well this year: allowing people to experience the farm fully, while making sure we are doing so safely and responsibly. I would like to share a reassuring comment from our 2025 external Health and Safety audit:

"There is a high level of responsibility for health and safety divested throughout the staff team. From the site visit it was clear that this responsibility is matched by both competency and a genuine culture for 'getting it right' and doing it well"

Looking back even further, to our very first AGM, I can't help but smile. We really were making it up as we went along in many ways: debating structures and trying to figure out what kind of organisation we even were! What strikes me most now is that, despite everything that's changed, the core of what brought us all together hasn't shifted at all. It's still about people, shared belief and the idea that together we can create something that genuinely matters.

I was once asked 'What's special about Fordhall?', and my answer remains the same. It is pioneering and everything good about what farming on a small scale should be. I love the rustic charm and community

atmosphere. It does some serious 'good' in the world without taking itself too seriously. My day-to-day life is very different, managing a large traditional rural estate. I have seen many changes at Fordhall over the years, but what hasn't changed is what makes this place special: it's you, the people, and the shared belief that we can do something amazing together.

So, for me, 2025 has been a year of reaffirmation as much as progress. A reminder of how far we've come, a glimpse of where we might go next and a strong sense that none of it happens without the people who make up this community.

Jack Tavernor, Chairperson

Volunteers tree planting



Jordan from the Care Farm enjoying a cuddle at lambing time



Your Tenant Farmer's Report

At the end of 2024 we launched a new online shop, which required a lot of investment in time and money along the way. I am pleased to report it's gone really well over the past 12 months, with credit to James, the Farm Shop Manager, and the team for all the effort in marketing and promoting it. We have seen a 19% increase in online customers and orders, which is really successful.

I'm incredibly proud of the team for the awards won in 2025. One was the Golden Fork for sustainability from The Guild of Fine Food. I am particularly proud of this as this doesn't just recognise what we do in the farm shop and butchery. It recognises the pasture-based farming system and our Foggage farming approach as a whole – the hard work that goes into making sure we do things properly and right is acknowledged. The other was for 'Online Business of the Year' in the Farm Shop and Deli Show.

The butchery extension completed back in 2024 has helped the whole year run smoother too. It's not necessarily helped us increase capacity, but it has given us more space and a much nicer working environment, which was incredibly well received by all the team.

The Farm

2025 was tricky with calving. Some calves were unusually weak, small and lacking in energy. They needed a lot of support to suckle and we had to feed them additional colostrum. We had a lot of help from our local vets and it transpired we had some mineral deficiencies, specifically iodine. This was new to us and things improved after supplements. We are now starting our 2026 calving and it's all going really well, they are all calving by themselves – even the first-timers and no apparent issues this time round.

In recent years, we had experimented with cows calving all year round, mainly because



we needed the cattle to fatten up all through the year for the farm shop. However, we were finding cattle that were calving closer to the winter were having smaller calves and didn't grow as well. So, we are looking now at tightening up the calving patterns to calve all in the early spring when the grass is getting going; hopefully all will be in April next year. So, when we then come to autumn, all the calves should be big enough and strong enough to be weaned. Managing the cattle being ready at the right time for the farm shop is a different challenge we will work to manage.



Charlotte and Farm Shop manager, James, receiving the Golden Fork Award for Sustainability in London

We also plan to put a bigger focus on breeding our own heifers. Previously, we have bought in young female cattle to breed with as older cattle went out of the herd. But we found a lot of these cattle didn't have a high success rate in terms of how long they lasted in the herd. After discussions with vets and other farmers I realised that the right thing is to pick the cattle that thrive and do really well in the herd, and keep the females to be our future breeding herd; something Dad had also always done.

The Foggage system we use here isn't common, not many people are doing it and a lot of cattle are not bred to live outdoors year-round as they do here. There is lots within the pedigree world sharing how well cattle grow and how easily they calve and what their various traits are. However, not many are doing this in a farming system like ours. Lots of cattle grow really quickly and produce lots of meat, but don't necessarily do it when they are out on grass all year.

Now, farmhand Shawn and myself go through the cattle each spring – we evaluate how they do and pick out the females that are doing really well. We'll then look back through the records at their mother and/or grandmother and how well she's done. We keep those with the strongest records for breeding. This can be difficult as it impacts on supply to the farm shop, but we need this longer-term view for the business overall and my long-term tenancy gives me the space to plan in this way.

The drought in 2025 hit us hard on the farm with virtually no grass during the summer. Normally the cattle lose some weight after they calve in the spring and when they are producing a lot of milk and feeding the calf. Then, towards the end of summer, when we see more grass growth, they'll put the weight back on and they are then in a good condition ready for the winter lean period.

But, with a lack of grass last summer, they went into the winter in quite poor condition. Thankfully, they've held what little condition they had through the winter by eating lots of great hay, and now they have come to a really nice spring. They are now absolutely blooming and even some of the cattle are a bit too fat, which can cause issues with calving.

The drought also meant we had to start feeding hay to the cattle at the end of August – we wouldn't normally start until November time. Thankfully, we had 200 bales left over from the previous season, but we still needed to buy in expensive organic hay to add to this.

More land

We've been helped by the opportunity to rent a little more land privately near Moreton Say. We have thought outside of the box a little bit and planted forage rape and grass as we were short of forage on that new land. This has given us overwintering forage for all of the sheep over the winter, and they have done incredibly well. Our pregnant ewes scanned at 200% – our best ever! This averages two lambs each. The lambs, including twins and triplets, were all incredibly healthy, probably the strongest lambs we've had. The new land will now become grassland and it will be part of the organic grazing system and somewhere to make extra hay, which we can sell if we don't need it ourselves – we don't want a situation like last summer!

20 years on

I'd now like to reflect on the past 20 years. When Charlotte and I took over, there was just us doing everything whereas now there are nine staff across the farm and shop teams. On top of that, there's another eight full time on catering, plus all the 100 or so casual staff. In 2006, we had eleven cows and six pigs. We've now got 180 cattle, 445

sheep and around 75 pigs. It is amazing to see where the farm has come and we are so grateful to still be here, doing what we love, on the land we were born on.

Cottage Field

Following the final eviction from Cottage Field last October, the pigs have been moved across the river into the woods and they are doing really well. It's been a bit wet over the winter, but is drying out now. After we moved them, they ate none of our pig feed for about two weeks, as they were happy foraging all the nuts, seeds and woodland creatures! The pigs are really happy in their new home.



The eviction from the final strip of Cottage Field that I had been renting also meant I have had to move all the catering trailers. These are all on the cattle yard temporarily while I look for a new home for them.

It is still not entirely clear what the landowner's plan is for Cottage Field. The only current access to the field is off our driveway, so I can only assume it's going

to just sit and become overgrown. This is a real shame. I would love to rent it from the landowners again, even just for hay cutting or grazing the sheep, but that option is not currently on the table.

Family

As well as helping on the farm, my eldest Jamie has put his passion for cooking to good use and has been making quiches for the shop. They are so good compared to supermarket versions. He is using up items from the shop such as cheese, milk and off-cuts of bacon, which all contributes to reducing any waste too! It is a real gift having Jamie and Izzy work alongside me on the farm after school, following their interests and sharing the journey.

Whatever the next 20 years brings, we are eternally grateful for the opportunity to be sharing this land with you all.

Ben Hollins, your Tenant Farmer
(Plus, Maz, Jamie, Isabelle and Lily)



General Manager's Report



As we celebrate our journey and, let's be honest, still existing after 20 years, it is natural that we look to the next 20. Fordhall is thriving in so many ways. We are fortunate to be in a position that we can impact positively within so many peoples' lives and within our natural environment.

Of course, some things don't always go to plan. Some things do go wrong. Most importantly, each year we are learning and evolving and, because of that, just as all the natural ecological systems around us, we become more resilient.

The pledge of an organic farm in Devon, together with conversations with others, is encouraging us to look at the future in a much broader way. How can we use our learning and huge community support to help more organic farms? How do we secure more livelihoods on the land and ensure Fordhall remains secure and resilient at the same time? How do we retain each farm's unique story, character and journey in the process?

These are important questions that we are investigating at the moment.

It needs careful consideration over legal structures, governance models and careful financial management. Other farmers without an obvious successor to their farm are seeking us out. They want their hard work on the land safeguarded, they want to offer opportunities for others and they want the local community to be part of its story.

Many of these farmers/landowners are interested in donating land whilst they are

still alive, so they can be part of its next chapter, whilst still receiving an income. How do we best marry these needs with community-ownership? How do we empower more citizens to be part of a farmer's story, whilst retaining autonomy for those living off the land? A successful model has to tick all the boxes and getting it right in Devon is our current focus.

We are not the only Community Land Trust having these discussions. Others in our sector are having them too. That's why we are talking to them as part of this process – sharing our collective knowledge. This is not a journey to be had in isolation; farming has had to much of that over the last century.

As the world becomes more unstable, it is easy to lose hope. It is easy for farmers to think they have nowhere to turn, and it is easy for consumers to believe they are powerless.

We do not believe that at Fordhall. We do believe in the combined power of small actions for a common good. Saving Fordhall Farm against the odds in 2006 proved this to us.



An organic Longhorn enjoying Fordhall haylage this winter. Able to live a happy life because you believed in us

We believe there can be a better future for British farmers. A future where they have long-term security on the land. One where a family's hard work nurturing natural ecosystems as well as producing food is appreciated, evidenced not simply through a subsidy payment, but through the partnerships and relationships they have with their community.

We believe in a food system which is supportive and not extractive. One that is collaborative and not isolated. A food system that brings out the best in us all.

Believing in it is one thing. Showing it has worked at Fordhall is an amazing achievement. The next challenge is proving it can work elsewhere.

That is exactly why we are launching an appeal this year to bring in 1000 new shareholders. We want to test the appetite to build the movement. We want to bring in more ideas and resources to fully investigate these concepts without putting anything we have at Fordhall at risk.

So, please spread the word. Please encourage friends and families to become shareholders of the Fordhall Community Land Initiative. We'll share the journey

with you every step of the way and we look forward to seeing what the next two decades bring.

Charlotte Hollins, General Manager



“From the very early days, we have been supported by our community. But, it was hard work too. Campaigning to save Fordhall meant attending every event we could, encouraging the local press to cover our story and finding excuses to invite the community onto the farm. Whilst Dad was still alive, he attended every event with us, and of course, he was the star of the show - always!”

Charlotte



Credit: Ashleigh Buick

What did we achieve in 2025?

SUSTAIN LIVELIHOODS on the land

To work forever in partnership with nature and our tenant farmer, protecting our soil to provide sustainable food and livelihoods.

Ben Hollins is the tenant farmer at Fordhall. Blessed with a 100-year tenancy agreement, he has security of tenure and the ability to live in the farmhouse and work the land with the confidence that his hard work and effort will reward not just his livelihood, but those of his children too.

At last year's AGM, you voted to update our Society Rules, and within that, one of our charitable objects was updated to definitively include 'the provision of affordable long-term tenancies following organic principles'. This means, if the FCLI is to purchase or be gifted more farmland in the future, it would have to manage it with these key principles, alongside public involvement and community benefit. A safeguard it was great to see you all agreed with.

Cottage Field

Cottage Field has been part of the Fordhall Farmstead for centuries. In 2006, when 128 acres were placed into community-ownership, the 12 acres of Cottage Field were not included in the sale. Until 2019, Ben had been able to rent these 12 acres from the original landowners without a hitch. However, in September 2019 they took back in hand the majority of the grassland and all of the woodland, only agreeing to lease to Ben on an annual basis, a narrow strip

where the pigs resided and a place to store his catering trailers. The remaining grassland was mostly vacant with short grazing licences being offered in the winter and an opportunity to cut the pasture for hay.

In September 2025, without warning, the landowners decided they would not renew Ben's annual agreement for that strip. He had to move his free-range pigs and his fleet of catering trailers off the field within weeks, the grazing licenses were not renewed and we have yet to see if a cut of hay is possible.

We suspect the motivation was linked to the revision of Shropshire's Local Development Plan. A process that is set to take at least the next three years. It remains a priority for us to regain and return this organic land to the Fordhall Farmstead.

We want to preserve its organic heritage and support our tenant farmer, by providing enough land to support his livelihood and the Foggage farming system that pioneer Arthur Hollins created. Also, by placing Cottage Field into community-ownership, we would be safeguarding it for organic farming in perpetuity, as well as being able to expand the delivery of our community, social and conservation projects onsite. Fordhall is nothing without its partnership between soil, people and planet. We continue to grow our funds through your generous donations and legacies. We remain hopeful one day we can secure ownership of it. Should anything develop, we will of course update you all as a matter of urgency.



EXPERIENCE nature

To create and maintain inclusive connections between people and nature to improve wellbeing, leaving lasting memories and understanding

In 2025, we introduced the Three Little Pigs trail which, as it turns out, is a great way to learn more about traditional building methods.

The introduction of Franky's Corner brings the public closer to our pig paddocks, providing enough space for a whole class to stand and look at mother and piglets. We would like to pass on a huge thank you to donor Jennifer Kendrick for funding this space in memory of her late Father, Franky. It's made a real difference to our visitor experience. Jennifer has also funded a second Countryside Worker Apprenticeship as her first apprentice, Ben, comes towards the end of his placement.

Accessibility has been further improved with the launch of a Braille Trail around the main visitor hub of the farm and community garden, thanks to donor Mel Jackson.

Our calendar of events included seasonal celebrations around food, such as Summer Solstice and a Mushroom Mosey foraging walk, with a busy summer of woodland-based children's activities. Our education team welcomed 716 children to Fordhall, all of whom enjoyed a full tour of the farm and obligatory worm dance. The focus of all of these activities is creating memories and the team have excelled themselves.

"I just wanted to say thank you very much for an excellent Wild in the Woods session today. My children were smiling from ear to ear when I picked them up.

They couldn't stop talking about their day; they were so excited to share the



School visits in 2025



games and activities they had completed.

It is unusual for them to speak so much about an experience, which is a huge compliment to Mike, Gemma and the team. Thank you all!"

Apparently, it's not the animals, not the fields that the children enjoy the most – it's Ben's butchery meat fridge! It is important to us that we do emphasise the field-to-fork concept, and this is a prime example of how Fordhall is able to do that.

Over on the Youth Project, the young people got truly stuck into conservation work. They built and put up 52 bird and bat boxes as part of the farm's environmental commitment. They also took on a lead role in constructing a new bird hide at the Castle Hill Pond, whilst the volunteers worked hard to extend the pond dipping platform.

Youth Project putting up homemade bird boxes



"I actually like nature now I've been coming here. I'm more of a nature person than I was before. I help my dad in the garden."

Youth Project participant

The Care Farm had a bumper growing year with carrots, beetroot, rhubarb, onions, radishes, salads, cauliflowers, beans, sweet peas and Italian courgettes either going home with our Care Farm members, or to our Chef to showcase on the menu in Arthur's Farm Kitchen. The Plant Stall they built has been a wonderful fundraiser for the members. They enjoyed some social summer BBQs together with some of the funds, and they are busy deciding what's next with the money they have raised.

NURTURE our planet

To minimise our climatic impact, whilst also enhancing our natural environment to build resilience and support biodiversity.

We launched our River Friendly Farming appeal in 2024. We have been busy carrying out the promised works in 2025 and will continue into 2026. Our first cow bathing pool is built, designed to enable cows to bathe and cool themselves. The base has been made from reclaimed concrete sleepers (old railway tracks) to reduce erosion; the pool has filled naturally with spring-fed water and the final natural filtration plants were added this May! These rushes and marsh plants will feed from all the nutrients from the cattle, aerate the water, and keep the main watercourse of the River Tern clean. So, it is official, Fordhall Farm has its first a cow spa!

Funded through our River Friendly Farming appeal, alongside match funding from Shropshire Green Spaces and Active Travel Fund, the Youth Project and volunteers worked hard on the construction of a new bird hide at Castle Hill Pond, as well as pollarding the surrounding alders to let more

light in, and extending the pond dipping platform to allow space for a whole class to gather and investigate the hidden life of the pond. Our plan is to inspire the next David Attenboroughs!



There is still a lot of work to be done at Castle Hill Pond, including removing lots of sediment to allow it to store more water, and rebuilding the drinking bay for the cattle to reduce erosion. Weather permitting, this will be completed in 2026 with the support of some additional funding from Levy.

Of course, everyone will remember how dry the summer of 2025 was. This left many of our newly planted Silvopasture trees on Banky Field exposed. Sadly, our sheep's wool mulch and constant watering was not



Cow bathing pool

“Brilliant tour and bug hunting experience again. The children loved learning about where their food comes from and how the farm works.”

Wrockwardine School April 2025

enough, so many had to be replanted this winter. We are actively looking at how we can



Volunteers worked hard on mulching, watering and planting trees during the winter periods

better water these new trees as we go into the 2026 season, through water bowsers, renewable energy pumps and more.

So, whilst a lot was completed in 2025 much of our Silvopasture and River Friendly farming work continues into 2026, including further tree planting for soil, livestock and wildlife!

We are giving a strong focus to our site-wide conservation plan as we move into 2026. With the view to creating a framework for maintaining and enhancing biodiversity across the farm over the next 20 years.

Monitoring what we have is crucial and our Conservation Lead, Ali, recently set out



It was a great turn out for our citizen science day - learning how to survey worms from expert Dr. Kevin Butt



some camera traps, which gave some really exciting results. We spotted our resident otter! It was an exciting moment to see more than just the otter spraint (poo) on the ground!

A worm count was also conducted by lecturer and European worm expert Dr Kevin Butt. We trained up our volunteers and members of the public and got sampling. Results were great across site, but House Field stood out with an average of 925 worms per square metre! That surpasses the British average of 390-525 per square metre. So, definitely something to celebrate.

NOURISH bodies and minds To provide and promote healthy, nutritious food using local, seasonal produce and encourage responsible eating choices through education.

We saw an 8% increase in customers to Arthur's Farm Kitchen. Despite a drop in larger weddings, we began to see growth in smaller family celebrations, putting Fordhall at the heart of such memorable occasions is something the staff really like and is a real privilege for us.

Arthur's Farm Kitchen also had a mini-makeover. Artist Helen Shackleton created a series of beautiful nature-based murals around the space. We think our favourite is the flying pig in reference to the Fight to Save Fordhall Farm!



Both the Care Farm and Youth Project retained their strong connections to food and health. Ensuring meals shared together are a regular occurrence at Fordhall.

A second

“Being outdoors makes me feel way better than being in the classroom...I have fresh air time to move. It actually makes me wanna go to school. Normally I’d have been suspended or refusing to go. Now I can cope.”

Youth Project participant

volunteer Elaine for making this project such a success. It has grown significantly over the past 18 months, so much so, another funder has recently donated a further £10,000 to extend the projects reach!

INSPIRE others

To share our story and expertise, empowering people to adopt an ecosystem approach to food, land management and community ownership.



year of funding from Lingen Davies enabled our Renew and Restore in Nature project to continue to grow and flourish. This great project enables individuals with a cancer diagnosis to come together and improve their sense of wellbeing immersed in nature (and sometimes the butchery - see below) as opposed to a clinical setting. They share experiences and to try out new things. The project has over 80 people registered who collectively booked 412 places in 24 sessions over the year. From our survey we saw a 30% increase in their mental wellbeing across the attendees in the year, which is incredible.

Huge thanks to our project lead Faye and long-standing

We have learned a huge amount in the last 20 years. The FCLI has continued to encourage Charlotte to offer mentoring and coaching to other land-based community projects. In 2025, she shared our learning with 11 other farms and spoke at a further 13 events and conferences.

Charlotte remains a figurehead of the We're Right Here campaign: a campaign for community power, which has been instrumental in the community right to buy legislation announced last year and now in legislation through the English Community Empowerment and Devolution Bill.

On a local level, Charlotte continued to pilot the Market Drayton and Rural Parishes community Covenant – a power-sharing relationship between Shropshire Council and the community of Market Drayton. The group has over 18 local representatives and have opened a new community and family hub in the town centre, putting locals firmly in control of how this operates and what it offers.

Charlotte was invited to the Labour



We asked:

If we supported more farms into community ownership directly through the Fordhall Community Land Initiative, what is most important to you, personally?

You said:

Vital:

Keeping Farms as working farms.
Safeguarding Farms from industrial or housing development.
Providing livelihoods on the land and long-term tenancies.
That the land is managed organically after becoming part of the FCLI.
That a place-based approach (local) approach to governance is incorporated, ensuring the local communities have a voice in each farm.

Very important:

Incorporating community engagement with the land/farm in some way.
Celebrating the individual heritage of each farm.

Not Important

That land/farms coming to the Fordhall Community Land Initiative are organic to begin with (this was almost ranked Important).

That you can visit it.

A feeling that you can part-own more than one farm.



We asked:

Do you think we should use the knowledge and skills we have gained over the last twenty years to help more farms move into community ownership?

You said:

Definitely 80.3%, Maybe 18.7%, No 1%



“Failure to take the initiative and help small farmers withstand the pressures of inheritance tax, soaring land values and lack of long-term tenancies will lead to the elimination of small, sustainable farms, leaving food production and nature in the hands of agribusiness and a handful of powerful landowners and corporations. Someone has to lead this battle, and if not Fordhall, then who?” Fordhall shareholder





Market Drayton and Rural Parishes Community Covenant has been a great success

Party conference to talk about this exciting initiative and to share learning that is influencing how neighbourhood governance will be implemented throughout the new English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill.

At Board level we have been looking at how Fordhall's story can inspire others. So, we have commissioned a final production of Arthur's Plough the musical (see back page). Originally touring Shropshire in 1992 celebrating Arthur's life in organic farming, it was updated and toured again in 2008. This will be the third and final production of Arthur's Plough and we welcome you all to enjoy the singing pigs and dancing

microbes, whilst learning all about the Hollins family and their deep connection to this land.

More Farms?

We have been looking at how our learning from the last 20 years can be used to build a bigger movement for community-ownership and, most importantly, to safeguard more farms. The Board's role is to reflect the view of the wider membership, so during 2025 we surveyed our members and asked 'Do you think we should support more farms into community-ownership?'. The response was very positive.

80.3% said FCLI should help more farms into community ownership.

85% said FCLI should invest time and resource into a feasibility study.

With this in mind, the Board has asked Charlotte to do a feasibility study into the prospect of taking on more farms and we look forward to sharing our progress in the coming years.

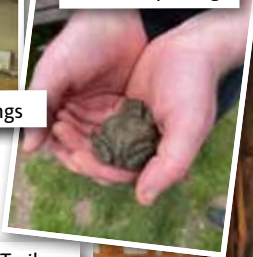


Plus...

Lots of food!



Wildlife spotting



Weddings



Farm Trails



Parties and events

Yurts



Welcome to Fordhall Farm
Proud to be community-owned
1 farmer,
8,000 landlords



Treasurer's Report

2025 has continued to be a very positive story, challenging – yes, but positive. Charlotte and the team have once again worked incredibly hard during the year doing all the things they do so brilliantly well, managing day to day costs and spending. This was achieved by a constant focus on looking for business opportunities and managing any associated costs. So, from myself and the Board I would like to say a big thank you to the whole Fordhall Team for 2025 –Thank You!

Our trading activities did make a small surplus in the year, but after depreciation this shows in the accounts as a deficit. The end of year accounting figures also takes into account any investments made from reserves during the year, for which some funds were received in the previous year. We continue to invest in our assets where needed and have the resources to do so.

So, let's just pick out a few bullet points from the year gone by and the year ahead -

- Wage costs continue to increase. We have added £25,000 extra to the wage bill in the 2026

year on the back of the increases to National Living Wage and National Insurance. The Board recognises how vitally important the staff are to Fordhall and has worked hard to find a way to adjust budgets and support these increases. We are a small charity and are restricted on our income, but we continue to do our utmost to properly value and reward our staff team as best we can.

- The Board have allocated £25,000 for renovation works on the south side of the farmhouse. This side of the farmhouse has received very little investment to date and currently remains in much the same state it did 50 years ago. It is expected the work will take place over the coming two years.

- We recognise the need for more land to ensure our farm can support the livelihood of our tenant farmer in the long term – by that we mean generations down the line, not just now and tomorrow. We will be launching an appeal in the future to help make this happen. I would like to acknowledge and thank those that have pledged support and already donated to the Cottage Field fund. This pot now stands at £73,000 to help secure this land.

- Regarding the Youth Project lottery funding in 2025. There was a funding gap during the

Balance Sheet Dec 31st 2024

| | 2025 | 2025 |
|--|-----------|-----------|
| FIXED ASSETS | | |
| Tangible assets | 1,305,496 | 1,329,383 |
| CURRENT ASSETS | | |
| Stocks and debtors | 43,150 | 51,103 |
| Cash at bank and in hand | 382,273 | 370,386 |
| CREDITORS falling due within one year <i>(including restricted funds)</i> | (180,564) | (171,477) |
| NET CURRENT ASSETS | 244,859 | 250,012 |
| TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES | 1,550,355 | 1,579,395 |
| CREDITORS falling due after one year | (18,006) | (25,891) |
| NET ASSETS | 1,532,349 | 1,553,504 |
| CAPITAL AND RESERVES | | |
| Share capital & share premium account | 699,800 | 703,350 |
| Income and expenditure account | 832,549 | 849,704 |
| SHAREHOLDERS' FUNDS | 1,532,349 | 1,553,504 |

second half of the year which we covered through reserves until new funding was awarded from The National Lottery Community Fund, secured for the next three years.

- The Silvopasture and River Friendly Farming appeals were very well received and supported. All funds raised will continue to be used as stated in the initial appeal documentation. This year we are concentrating on growing our number of shareholders and have set ourselves the ambitious target of 1000 new shareholders in 2026 – well it is our 20 year Anniversary! So, if any shareholders have friends or relatives that they would like to gift a share or shares too, we of course would welcome that support.

- As we reach the milestone of two decades of Fordhall Community Land Initiative we have taken the bold decision in 2026 to recruit an Operations and Business Manager. This role will be focused on building our trading activities and raising our income to support the business as we move forward. The success of this role will be closely monitored. We hope to see financial benefits from this role later this year and into 2027. This will help us to remain strong and able to continue to invest in our greatest asset – our land and our people!

Talking of 20 years, I should mention we are looking to capitalise on publicity in this our landmark 20th Anniversary year. We have allocated modest funds for additional marketing and some investment for an updated version of Arthur's Plough musical play which will hit the stage in October this year in both Market Drayton Festival Centre and at Shrewsbury's Theatre Severn – tickets on sale now!

We are beyond grateful for all of the donations we receive each year, be they small or large. You cannot believe the difference donations make and every time one is received there is a new buzz of excitement and gratitude. We also recognise that not everyone is able to give financially and we are equally as grateful to everyone who gives up their time, effort, energy, enthusiasm to support our journey. Our success is shared with you all. Thank You.

Paul Austin, FCLI Treasurer

2025 (£) 2024 (£)

OPERATING INCOME

| | | |
|-----------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Merchandise | 568 | 432 |
| Property rental | 20,500 | 20,500 |
| Events & courses | 1,605 | 3,579 |
| Education | 140,959 | 141,553 |
| Arthur's Farm Kitchen | 168,662 | 164,912 |
| Newsletter | 17,547 | 18,537 |
| Gifts & donations | 104,567 | 57,820 |
| - Legacy income | 1,000 | 776 |
| Gift Aid | 10,615 | 12,783 |
| Grants | 53,530 | 34,859 |
| Other income | 12,235 | 1,628 |
| Consultancy | 5,482 | 14,831 |
| Yurts & Straw Lodge | 29,950 | 36,353 |
| TOTAL Income | 567,220 | 508,563 |

OPERATING COSTS

Costs of generating funds

| | | |
|-------------------------|--------|--------|
| Merchandise | 451 | 372 |
| Events & courses | 3,473 | 3,930 |
| Advertising & marketing | 4,086 | 4,319 |
| Project delivery | 22,592 | 21,276 |
| Education materials | 14,233 | 15,166 |
| Arthur's FK purchases | 63,314 | 62,823 |

Management and Administration

| | | |
|-------------------------------|---------|---------|
| Staff salaries, NIC & pension | 352,815 | 328,890 |
| Travel | 4,403 | 1,971 |
| Printing & office supplies | 17,788 | 17,098 |
| Accountancy & audit | 4,760 | 4,435 |
| Heat & light | 14,545 | 11,621 |
| Insurance & rates | 11,554 | 10,693 |
| Repairs & maintenance | 19,455 | 9,903 |
| Telephone & internet | 973 | 991 |
| Subscriptions | 1,951 | 1,555 |
| Bank charges | 2,294 | 1,602 |
| Legal & professional | 2,540 | 5,594 |
| Staff training | 5,333 | 6,064 |
| Sundry expenses | 651 | 609 |
| Depreciation | 42,718 | 45,301 |
| Unrecoverable VAT | 1,633 | (3,788) |

| | | |
|---------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Total Costs | (591,562) | (550,425) |
| Operating Surplus | (24,342) | (41,862) |
| Other interest receivable | 8,097 | 7,913 |
| Interest payable | (910) | (1,184) |
| Surplus/Deficit | (17,155) | (35,133) |

Auditor's Report:

In our opinion the financial statements: give a true and fair view of the state of the Society's affairs as at 31st December 2025 and of its income and expenditure for the year then ended; and have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and are in accordance with the requirements of the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014.



Thank you to all our fantastic volunteers in 2025

These amazing 190 people together clocked up over 2,970 hours
(3,557 hours in 2024 from 135 volunteers).

Tamsyn Ainsbury, Alexander Allan, Katherine Allan, Jenny Allaway, Katie Allen, Kate Almoosa, Keith Atkey, Paul Austin, Matt Axford, Nicola Axford, John Baguley, Sally Baguley, Andrew Bailey, Steve Ballard, Rosemary Barker, Paul Beevers, Des Bennett, Hannah Billingham, Suzie Botting, Naomi Boulton, Richard Bown, Joanna Brambley, Paul Brambley, David Braunsberg, Steven Breeze, Dan Bridgewater, Danny Bridgewater, Tim Brooks, Will Brown, Reem Chamout, Jayne Chapman, Howard Chetwynd, Neil Clark, Alice Clarke, Catherine Clarke, Jan Collins, Julie Cooper, Joyce Darby, Amy Davidson, Chris Davies, Laura Day, Will Dennis, Kelly Donati, Lucy Dowley, Clive Dyer, Kathryn Edwards, Chris Eldon-Lee, Saul Elijah, Nina Elizabeth, Christine Evans, Callum Ewan, Lucy Ewan, Christine Fish, Laurence Fowler, Mike Foy, Julian Francis, Dylan Franklin, Callum Furber, Harry Gamble, Ian Garnham, Sarayah Garnham, Sian Gatenby, Nicola Gifford, Emily Grabarz, Amy Green, Suzanne Grundy, Danny Hampson, Amica Hardy, Peter Hardy, Buffy Hardy, Andy Harper, Angela Harper, Richard Harvey, Will Hawkins, Connie Hollins, Izzy Hollins, Benjamin Hollins, Matt Horton, John Hughes, Eleanor Humphries, Elaine Hunt, Michael Isaacs, Sandy John, Chris Jones, Jackie Jones, Sharon Jones, Inlandis Jones, Ilana Kali, Buffy Kane, Mike Kendrik, Victoria Kenny, Ruth King, Ruth Knight, Ruth Lang, Ellie Lee, Ruth Lee, Rob Lee, Anthony Lewis, Elaine Lewis, Audrey Love, Bernice Love, Peter Mardy, Edward Marvin, Bill McAllister-Lovatt, Sue McAllister-Lovatt, Edward McCarthy, Amanda McDonnell, Lindsey McGibbon, Lesley McNeil, Dave Mellor, Alaric Miller, Chris Mills, Caroline Morales, Alan Morris, Stephen Morris, Christopher Mould, Christienne Murray, Daniel Nicholls, Kirsty Nicholls, Charlie Nobile, Nikki Park, Andy Parks, Joseph Pembleton-Hope, Dominic Pinto, Megan Platt, Katie Potter, Graham Powell, David Proctor, Craig Raxter, Claire Raxter, Oscar Raxter, Elliot Raxter, Tim Reeves, Michael Revell, Michael Reynolds, Dilys Riley, Peter Riley, Wendy Roberts, Nick Rose, Sallie Ryan, Matilda Simon, Sarah Smith, Ed Smith, Kath Smith, Laura Smith, Pam Smith, Sarah Smith, Stephanie Soruce, Rosie Stead-Brennan, Guy Steel, Sharon Steel, Claire Sumner-Hughes, Jamie Talbot, Christine Tate, Jack Tavenor, Gerry Thomas, Leda Tustin, Cheryl Walker, Fiona Walker, Sue Walker, Ben Walkington, Jane Walkington, Viv Watkins, Kyan Wellings, Chris White, Freddy Williams, Nicholas Woodward, Matthew Young, Sallie Young, Environment Agency, 1st Newport Scout and Grace and Dux Advisory for all our payroll support.

Thank you x

Interested in volunteering?

We have weekly opportunities on our
Volunteer Weekends or regular Farm Fridays.
Call 01630 638696 or email
alison.fowler@fordhallfarm.com for details.


Free to Visit: Tuesday - Sunday

Fordhall Community Land Initiative Ltd.
Fordhall Organic Farm
Market Drayton
Shropshire, TF9 3PS
Office tel: 01630 638696
Farm shop tel: 01630 317531
Email: project@fordhallfarm.com

Opening Times for Farm Trails, Arthur's Farm Kitchen and Shop:

Tues - Sat: 9.30am - 5pm (Shop & Trails)
10am - 4pm (Arthur's Farm Kitchen)
Sun: 10am - 4pm (also open Bank Holidays)

Follow us

 @FordhallOrganicFarm

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 www.fordhallfarm.com

Fordhall Community Land Initiative Ltd
Community Benefit Society Registered: IP30030R
Exempt Charity reference: XR91116

Fordhall Farm & Love Lee Productions
proudly present **Chris Eldon Lee's**
updated musical play about Shropshire's
famous **Fordhall Farm** based on the lives
of **Arthur, Ben and Charlotte Hollins.**

Arthur's Plough 2026



**Celebrating the 20th
anniversary of the
saving of Fordhall
Organic Farm**

featuring **The Moonlight
Revellers & The Mere Singers**
plus performing pigs, dancing
microbes and plenty of organic
muck, mirth and magic!

Market Drayton Festival Centre

Saturday 17th October at 2.30pm and 7.30pm
Tickets 01630 654444 festivaldraytoncentre.com

Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

Thursday 22nd Friday 23rd Saturday 24th October
at 7.30pm with a Saturday matinee at 2.30pm
Tickets 01743 281281 theatresevern.co.uk

WONDERFUL!
Shropshire Star
Real country wit,
nice and deep and
warm! **BBC Radio 4**

