

Millennium Farm Trust
Annual General Meeting
16th July 2025 2pm Depden Care Farm

Present

Tim Freathy	Kevin Chapman	Mark Leadbeater
Georgie Scott	Jayne Mansfield	Carol Owens
Alf Percival	Peter Turnbull	Gill Edmonds
Janice Percival	Gill Turnbull	Jerry Massey
Chris Robinson	Dave Gorham	Helen Wilson
Alex Percival	Tandi Gredley	Michael Morgan
Claire James	Beth Maddock	Jane Williamson
Tony Carter	Chelsea Larkin	Finlay Walsh
Kathleen Leadbeater	Elizabeth Mc Cormick	Hubert Soliwoda
Ellie Bridges	Emma Morris	Jason Dougan
Jade Underhill	Holly Corris	Eden Boast
Nic King	Matthew Peters	Gylda Nunn

Apologies

Lou Wells, Amanda O'Neil, Brett Cowell

1. Welcome and Chairman's Report

Millennium Farm Trust

Annual General Meeting 16th July 2025

A warm welcome to the Annual General Meeting of the Millennium Farm Trust (MFT). The Trust is a Charity and a Company and runs Depden Care Farm. The purpose of the AGM is for the Board to report on what has been achieved over the 12-month period from April 2024 to March 2025 and the related financial matters. With me today are fellow Board members Helen and Gylda. Apologies from Lou, Amanda and Bret who have work commitments.

The Care Farm is a special place, and the big event last year was the celebration of the MFT Trust being 25 years old and our tenth birthday at Depden Care Farm. What an amazing year with so many different things going on. We had the anniversary raffle with

over 40 stunning prizes that raised over £3,300 for our charity. Well done everyone who sold tickets, and a special thank you to Cheryl Cowell who coordinated the donations. We also had hundreds of visitors to the Farm during the year as part of the Depden open gardens; the family fun day the Christmas nativity. Many people visited us for the first time, and, from the feedback, everyone went away happy and impressed with the farm, the animals and the lovely venue we have created here. We also found time to complete several building projects including work to the aviary and our new pigsty, for which we received grant aid including a much-appreciated contribution from the Bury Abbey Rotary Club.

None of this could have happened without the hard work of everyone involved in the care farm. I now wish to focus on thanking those who has been involved in making Depden such a rewarding place to work and learn.

Firstly, a big thank you to all my colleagues on the MFT Board. With an annual turnover getting close to £400,000 MFT has grown to a medium sized charity. This growth means the shape and purpose of the Board will need to change and this is something we are reviewing at the moment. The Board has recently reduced from 7 to 6 members with Peter deciding to step back from his Trustee role and focus on being a volunteer. The care farm has a very special place in Peter's heart, and we should all be pleased that his last task for the Board was to steer the negotiations for a new lease that guarantees that Depden will continue to be home for the care farm until 2030. Thank you, Peter. Depden Care Farm is very fortunate in having a group of hard-working staff with a wide range of skills. It has been a real pleasure to see how the Team has grown and developed over the year, taking on new tasks and responsibilities and giving everything to ensure the farm is a good place to work and learn. The Board appreciates the important and essential role staff play in making Depden the success it so obviously is. The farm is so lucky to have a dedicated group of volunteers who, on a weekly basis, work with staff and the farm helpers to form the operational backbone of the farm. In addition, the Saturday volunteering days are well attended and achieve so much. The Board offers a big thank you to all volunteers. We could not do what we do without your help.

Later we will be recognising all the new and improved skills individual farm helpers have developed during the year. Before that, the Board wishes to thank all farm helpers for the tremendous work they do. On a day-to-day basis and whatever the challenges our weather presents you show dedication in completing the daily work routine of caring for the animals and growing food. You also take the opportunity to get involved in other activities which this year includes several building projects, creating a new and impressive sign board for the veg shed and, of course, going out on the tipper truck to carryout contract work. So, a big thank you to all farm helpers for your loyalty to the farm. We are very proud of you.

My final vote of thanks is to the farms management team – which is a posh name for Tim and Tom. We all know that Tim has boundless energy and a wealth of ideas and innovations to keep the care farm moving forward. Toms' role is to turn those ideas into deliverable actions. This is working well, and the Board is delighted to see how Tim as Director and Tom as Farm Operations Manager, have developed a positive relationship that is adding a new level of dynamism to the overall management and direction for the Farm. Thank you both.

I will now handover to Helen who will look in more detail at where we get our money from and how we spend it.

2. Treasurers report (Helen. Trustee to present)

Simplified accounts were circulated. Full accounts were available. Helen Wilson, Trustee presented the accounts.

This continues to be a very important function for our charity and our financial position is carefully monitored and managed through our Finance committee who meet on a regular basis.

Income

Total income for the year was just under £378k and the majority of this, some £340k comes from the attendance fees. These fees cover all the day to day operational running costs of the farm.

Donations and grants account for £16k worth of income and include monies from Rotary, Suffolk Trail Riders, St Edmunds Trust and John Lewis Partnership. We continue to be very grateful for any grant or donation we receive and these are generally used for non-day to day operational spend or projects.

Contract work generated just over £5k worth of income and we are delighted with the expansion and success of this work stream. Many of you like to get involved and really enjoy doing the off-site work.

Produce sales contributed just under £7.5k worth of income and includes eggs, salad, fruit and veg which is grown, produced and sold at the farm along with our Christmas trees, bird boxes and other items of woodwork.

Another really important income stream is that of Fundraising where this year we raised an astonishing £8k. This includes, Family Fun Day, Living Nativity, Rookery Farm Open Garden event, and a brilliant sponsored walk which a number of farm helpers, staff and volunteers took part in.

Expenses

In terms of expenses, our total spend for the year was just under £332k. The biggest single spend continues to be salary costs for our staff and management team which accounts for some £218k and enables the farm to operate day to day.

Farm consumables accounted for just over £24k worth of expenses. This covers animal feed, vet fees and general animal care. It also accounts for the cost of fencing, new tools and general farm equipment.

Utilities, primarily water and electricity accounted for just over £10k.

Farm rental, insurance and costs associated with the new lease account for £17k.

The only other area of spend I'd like to pull out is the £26k investment into the projects which last year included the aviary extension, animal shelters & pig-sty and pole barn.

So, in summary, our total income was £378k and total spend just over £332k

We continue to have a healthy cash position and this will help support our project plan for this year. Our major farm project is the farm access to the veg garden.

3. Election of officers (Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer)

The meeting was required to appoint a chairman, secretary and treasurer for the forthcoming year. Jerry had agreed to remain the Chair and Lou had agreed to remain the treasurer. There being no other nominations, they were both duly elected. Jerry Massey will remain as company secretary. Tim Freathy proposed and Gylfa Nunn seconded the proposal.

4. AOB

There being no other business the meeting concluded at 2.35pm.

Depden Care Farm Reflections 2025

Tim Freathy Director rounded off the formal proceeding with his own personal reelection on the year.

Hello everyone,

I just want to take a few minutes to say something important—especially to all of you who come to the farm each week.

You are the heart of Depden Care Farm.

This year, just like the ten years before it, you've shown what care farming is all about: turning up, getting stuck in, learning new things, and supporting one another. Whatever the weather, whatever's going on in your lives—you keep showing up. And that takes courage. That takes determination.

I see it when you lift each other's spirits on a tough day. I see it in the way you learn new skills, help feed the animals, grow food from seed, fix things around the site, and take pride in what you do. Every time you try something new, every time you ask a question, every time you help a friend—you're building something that matters. Not just for yourself, but for the whole community.

One of my proudest moments last year was watching so many of you take part in our 10-year anniversary sponsored walk. You walked miles around this holding, raised money, and showed everyone what this place means to you. Some of you doubted whether you could do it—but you did. And you did it together. That's what Depden is about.

That walk wasn't just about raising money—it was a reminder that you are the story of this place. You make the farm what it is. You give it its energy, its warmth, its sense of fun and family. Your effort, your laughter, your ideas, your kindness—it all adds up. And it makes a real difference.

So today, I want to say thank you. Thank you for turning up. Thank you for being brave. Thank you for working hard. Thank you for believing in yourselves and in each other.

You are not just part of Depden—you are Depden.

And I can't wait to see what we do together next.