



Festive Greetings!

Happy New Year to you all! Countryways CIC is proud to celebrate a decade of providing support to hundreds of individuals through connecting with nature, farming and the outdoors, we even had a Summer Barn Dance! Delivering over 480 special individual sessions annually for people with learning difficulties, mental and or physical health challenges, and at least 50 group visits for others, we're having a great impact! Seeing people gain confidence, new skills and building friendships through coming here is very special. We couldn't do this without a brilliant team of committed, talented and caring people, and we're so grateful for crucial funding support from kind individuals and charitable organisations, especially thanking the Rothschild Foundation.

Thank you everyone who support us in enabling our Care Farming to happen and we wish you all a very merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

Farm Helpers Update

Our 12 regular weekly Farm Helpers engage here with the animals and use varied practical skills. Some find communication very difficult or suffer extreme anxiety, but their confidence can return with animal interaction or skills involvement. Several young men are now very capable of woodturning beautiful items on the lathes, but started here as individuals never trusted at school with a pair of scissors!



Families Enjoy Open Farm Sunday

Over 700 people visited our farm throughout the day to celebrate Open Farm Sunday and to enjoy beautiful *Road Farm* and the surrounding Chilterns countryside. Many either joined our farmer-led walks which highlighted the different aspects of farming, biodiversity, wildlife or followed our map on a self-guided tour. Sheep dog demonstration, spotting the Queen Bee, woodturning and meeting the goats sessions were all a marvel. Well done and thank you to everyone who came, helped out and shared the day with us all.

"All of it was wonderful. It was great to see a real life farm, which is why we enjoy going to these." We loved learning about everything."

We hope to see you again at Open Farm Sunday on 8 June 2025.



Group Visits

Over the Summer holidays we held 6 Dawn and Dusk Wildlife Explorer meetings for young people and when weather permitted, we listened to a great array of bats with technology, used apps for bird identification and binoculars for spotting (thanks to Farm & Gardens). We've also welcomed some corporate groups here for inspirational team away days, and it was especially good to have the Spinal Injury Unit Occupational Therapy department!

Winter Festive Appeal

Please support Countryways' Christmas Appeal, helping us raise vital funds to continue to deliver and grow our farm service to vulnerable people locally. Please scan the QR code to donate, or visit:

www.roadfarmcountryways.com/christmasappeal

Even the smallest amounts can go a long way in the work we do.



A snapshot of visitors in 2024



CONTACT US

If you would like to find out more about what we do and how we can help or if you'd just like to chat, you can contact us:

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Countrymen Connections

This year our Countrymen have met come rain or shine for a social and gently active time at the farm. This has included checking the animals, tending to the polytunnel fruit and veg, making festive willow stars, re-felting the rabbit's hutch, metal detecting, making a farm-themed selfie frame, and even preparing pea and watercress soup! Our 20 or so members are a pleasure to involve on the farm and have so much valuable knowledge, practical skills and interesting – and funny – stories to share!

School Visits

We've had many happy farm visits from local schools, even involving jam making, *apple juicing* and butterfly counts. We can offer a number of free Friday school visits on all sorts of topics so please encourage schools you know to apply for learning in the outdoors at Road Farm!

Staff & Volunteers

We now have 4 staff (3 part time) and a band of essential skilled volunteers. We've updated our First Aid training with Rich from Bright Star. Taking on new people has emphasised how crucial it is to maintain help and fresh ideas for sustained delivery without exhaustion into the future. Thanks especially to BOTH staff Emilys for kindness and commitment, and to Jono, our dependable evening livestock volunteer who has freed up 2 of Wendy's evenings! NB: Our Amazing Volunteer Finance Director John Shaw will retire this year so we need a new person for this critical role ASAP...do you know someone?

'Inspired to Grow' sees youngsters flourish

Inspired to Grow, based in our polytunnel and orchard area, aimed to build confidence in young people to sustainably grow and then taste diverse, nourishing plants, and explore connections between soil, biodiversity and fungi.



A group of teenagers participated in 15 workshops covering diverse topics from biodiversity, seasonal planting, exploring mushrooms & alternative protein sources to cooking ingredients, preserving, and planting fruit trees. It was a joy to see the young people excited by growing foods, their confidence boosted, friendships made, practical skills learnt and hobbies developed, all helping on the pathway to independence. Thanks to Heart of Bucks for their funding support.

Watch this space for more growing initiatives in the coming year, and even an after school GOAT Club.

