

SURREY DOCKS FARM PROVIDENT SOCIETY LTD

ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2022



Registered Society No: 22829R

A registered society under the Co-operative & Community Benefit Societies Act 2014, recognised by HM Revenue & Customs as a tax exempt charity

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OVERVIEW

THE FARM

Surrey Docks Farm is a working city farm and education charity that enables the whole community to learn about farming, food production and the natural environment.

We run a range of community projects targeted to engage those who will benefit most and are supported by over a hundred dedicated volunteers who attend on a weekly basis.

The Farm was established by local people in 1975 and has been serving the community from the banks of the river Thames ever since.



CONTACT DETAILS

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Website: www.surreydocksfarm.org.uk

Social Media: Follow us on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook
[@surreydocksfarm](https://twitter.com/surreydocksfarm)

HIGHLIGHTS

ACTIVITIES & DEVELOPMENTS

Following a long period of closures due to the pandemic, we were delighted to deliver this financial year with all our community projects on site and to welcome visitors back in record numbers!

We had a successful year engaging thousands of people from our local community and beyond. Examples include:

- Over 50,000 visitors enjoyed free access to the Farm's site.
- 45 young people aged 8-13 attended our established youth clubs, and 20 young people aged 14-18 engaged in a new youth club.
- 15 children engaged in a new weekly Forest School programme.
- 6 young people developed leadership skills in our Youth Committee, informing the direction of the youth programme and delivering social action projects.
- Farm meat, eggs, fruit and vegetables were sold via our online shop and later through our physical farm shop, providing fresh quality food for over 600 households.
- 2 apprentices were employed, trained and supported to develop careers in the Livestock and Horticultural industries.
- 30 weekly training placements for adult students with learning disabilities were delivered onsite
- 10 adults referred via Southwark Wellbeing Hub to our new weekly Gardening for Wellbeing sessions
- 122 local people aged 18+ volunteered on a regular basis. An additional 40 drop in volunteers attended in the summer months.

We were awarded London Youth's City & Guilds accredited Silver Quality Mark for our Youth Programme; received a London in Bloom Silver Gilt Award in the Environmental Challenge category and gained our Green Flag Community Award.

LIVESTOCK

OVERVIEW

We encourage people to look, touch and learn about livestock. We care for a range of animals including goats, sheep, pigs, donkeys, poultry and small animals.

We are proud to be a working farm. We produce meat and eggs which are sold through our farm shop. We encourage people to think about where their food comes from, to support high welfare farms and minimise food miles.

We support young people to progress into the Livestock industry through our 18 month apprenticeship programme.

We have an apiary in our orchard with several bee hives. We engage participants to learn about our bees and honey production and sell the honey to our local community.

Every day we muck out the animals, piling dirty straw up on the muck heaps. To speed up the rotting process we 'water' with the run-off and effluent from our bio-digesters. Once rotted, the manure is either used on site for natural fertiliser or loaded into ton bags to deliver to other community gardens. This turns a waste product into a resource.

HIGHLIGHTS

We partnered with KEITS to deliver a new Level One Diploma scheme in 'Work Based Animal Care' for our livestock volunteers. This developed more skills and employment opportunities for local young people.

We extended our links with other London city farms and commercial farms. For example: parading in the Lord Mayor's Show, with the Worshipful Company of Farmers, NFU, Red Tractor and New Holland to promote climate-friendly food produced by British Farmers; taking our participants to visit commercial farms and learn about careers in agriculture; volunteering with the London Sheep Drive; competing in agriculture shows and taking part in City Farm Day!

LIVESTOCK

"The animals are what motivates me the most - I have loved getting to know them all and learning how to look after them - that's been the best thing about volunteering. However the new friends I have made has also been a huge motivation to keep at it, feeling part of the team and helping others enjoy it has been very rewarding."

Livestock Volunteer



"Volunteering is important to me, not only is it beneficial to my physical and mental wellbeing, but I also really enjoy my time spent here. The Farm supported me to gain a level 1 in land based animal care, through a traineeship so I now have the qualifications to apply for a paid role!"

Livestock Trainee

"Being at the farm has really helped me de-stress and focus more on nature. It is great to be around animals in the middle of London and I cherish the hours I spend at the farm."

Livestock Volunteer



FOOD GROWING & GREENING

OVERVIEW

The Farm's green spaces include large community gardens where local people are taught the practical skills needed to grow fruit and vegetables; an orchard producing a fine harvest of apples; a wildlife garden and hedgerows; a herb and natural dye garden; and more!

Our green spaces are accessible and open for visitors to explore. Our farm shop sells our seasonal fruit and vegetables, and a selection of plants.

We continued to engage with members of our 'Rotherhithe Community Gardening Network' meeting online and in person at different sites, to connect and support local community gardens, allotments and home growers.

We've hugely benefited from our fantastic new greenhouse that was installed in March 2021. We created hot beds by adding woodchip, waste coffee grounds and water, then we left this to rot down in the bays. This rotting process creates a lot of heat. We sat our seedlings in pots above and with the heat warming the soil, they grew faster and we were able to extend the growing season! The final woodchip mixture is then sieved and used as a peat replacement in our potting compost.

HIGHLIGHTS

We celebrated gaining our 'Green Flag Community Award', an international quality mark for parks and green spaces.

We were thrilled to see our first Horticulture Apprentice successfully graduate and take on a full time market gardening role in Kent. In September we welcomed our second full time Horticulture Apprentice; who trains one day at Walworth Garden gaining a Work Based Horticulture diploma. Our thanks go to our funders, who enable us to provide this opportunity with a London Living Wage salary.

FOOD GROWING & GREENING



"Impressive demonstration of innovation in the management of the site and ways of connecting with communities and offering opportunities. A fascinating and inspiring green space which provides a fantastic range of benefits and opportunities to the communities it serves. All involved should be exceptionally proud."

Green Flag judge



"It has been a joy, to be safely outside in the fresh air tending to vegetables of choice. There is the added bonus of being able to ask advice from staff when needed. There is a lovely community spirit."

Community Plot Holder



ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY

OVERVIEW

As a working farm in central London we're not the usual place you'd associate with wildlife, but we work hard to make the Farm a home for nature. We 'garden for wildlife' and follow organic principles. We grow wildflowers for pollinators, leave nettle patches and log piles for invertebrates. We install bee, bat and bird boxes and have a dedicated Wildlife Garden and pond that hosts over 50 frogs each Spring.

We work with organisations in the Southwark Biodiversity Partnership to deliver the Southwark Nature Action Plan 2020 by increasing biodiversity at the Farm; with a particular focus on improving habitats for amphibians, house sparrows and bees.

We are a demonstration site for sustainable energy practices. We harvest rainwater to flush the toilets and water the gardens; we gain energy from our solar panels; and we boil the kettle with gas from our bio-digester (which is fuelled by animal waste). We have very little machinery but any we do need is run on electricity generated from our solar panels.

HIGHLIGHTS

We were delighted to gain a London in Bloom Silver Gilt Award in the Environmental Challenge category. Thanks to our past Horticulture Apprentice who applied on our behalf and the team for all their efforts making the Farm a wildlife-friendly, minimal waste, sustainable space.

We engaged visitors in the Big Butterfly Count with spotter charts available at the Farm entrance.

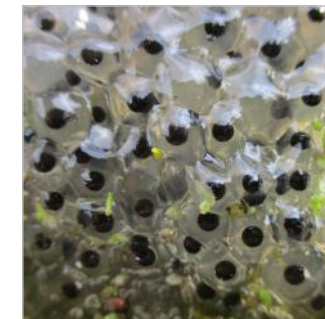
Young Farmers took part in the RSPB Garden Birdwatch, all the children and young people used binoculars and bird ID charts to contribute their sightings. They also completed several AQA Unit Awards focused on nature and local conservation.

ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY



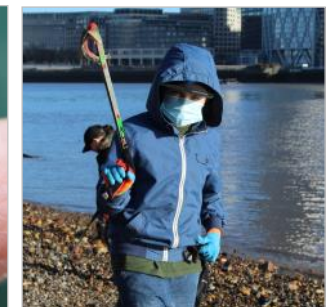
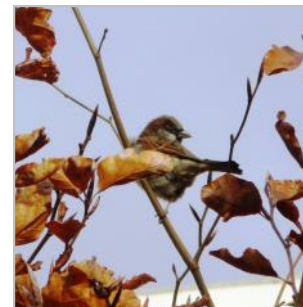
"The farm is a wonderful environment where people can find a sense of calmness. I especially enjoy going to the wildlife garden when there is loud noise. It's really quiet and you can hear the chirping of the birds. It's soothing!"

Youth Club Member



"Young Farmers has made me more aware about environmental and climate issues. It has also expanded my knowledge on the natural world. Coming to the farm has allowed me to be more peaceful and caring towards nature."

Youth Club Member



PEOPLE & PARTNERSHIPS

OVERVIEW

We provide opportunities for the whole community to engage in farming, food production and the natural environment. This includes a range of meaningful volunteer opportunities for local people; delivering a weekly youth programme for those aged 8-14; developing partnership projects with community organisations; linking with local schools; delivering training projects for adult students with learning disabilities; providing plots for local people to grow their own food; and much more.

We ensure our participants voices are heard and acted on. For example, following a consultation with all our young people in 2020 we successfully gained funding to launch a new youth club for those aged 14-18. Young people sat on the interview panel to recruit a new Youth Worker and they established the new youth club which was named 'Greenagers' by the participants.

VISITORS & PARTNERSHIPS

Over 50,000 visitors enjoyed free access to the Farm. After closure for over a year due to the Covid pandemic, we welcomed people back in record numbers via our Thames path entrance.

We partner with many community organisations to ensure we are fully inclusive and are engaging a cross section of the community.

For example on a weekly basis we host:

- Carpentry reparation sessions for Southwark Youth Offending Service
- English lessons for participants from Southwark Day Centre for Asylum Seekers
- Volunteering for the BEDE learning disability team

We also engage with a range of referral organisations to welcome those most in need into our dedicated community projects.

PEOPLE & PARTNERSHIPS

"The gardening, being outdoors, connecting with nature and other people contributes enormously to my social, mental and physical wellbeing and gives me a sense of connection to our community"
Volunteer



"Being a young farmer is fun because you get to do activities most people won't get to do like make fire, spend time with the animals close-up building things in the wildlife garden and gardening."
Young Farmer



"We all had a wonderful time, my face hurt afterwards from smiling so much! I loved seeing the smiles on all our members faces"
Time & Talents Staff



PEOPLE & PARTNERSHIPS

YOUTH PROGRAMME

Surrey Docks Farm's Youth Programme transforms young peoples' lives, providing the skills, experiences and horizon-widening opportunities they can't get elsewhere so that they can thrive and build happy, healthy and secure futures.

Our youth offer is unique in London, giving young people the chance to become involved in the day to day life of our working farm through weekly, long-term and impactful programming. Young people are supported by a professional team of youth workers and volunteers to help reach their potential.

This year we engaged 65 young people in our Young Farmers and Greenagers programmes. We welcomed an additional 60 children through our holiday programme and launched a new Forest School offer, engaging a further 12 children and young people to experience the benefits of the Farm environment.

We also have a Youth Committee who meet on a monthly basis, the committee inform the direction of the Youth Programme and meet with our Management Committee to ensure we are hearing directly from young people at board level.

This year our Youth Committee took part in social action projects through London Youth City Leaders Programme. They created signage for the Farm, plus blogs and podcasts which can be read and listened to on our [website](#).

SCHOOLS

The Farm has an excellent educational reputation. We welcome over 100 different schools each year offering self-led visits and farm-led workshops and tours, that are tailored to support the National Curriculum and specific teacher requirements.

Following the impacts of the pandemic we were delighted to welcome schools back in the Spring and Summer seasons for educational workshops and tours. Sadly bookings were once more paused with the Omicron risks in Winter 2021.

PEOPLE & PARTNERSHIPS



"Since joining Forest School his anxiety has definitely lessened, he gets up early and ready for 'farm school' as he calls it and looks forward to seeing the other children as well as the animals." Forest School Parent

"I never thought I'd be confident enough to speak in front of lots of people - then I presented at the Farm's AGM and I pitched a funding bid in the Council buildings to a room full of people!"

Youth Committee Member



"Everyone who works at the farm was so warm and welcoming to the children. It was such a pleasure to explore after lockdown and we all absolutely loved it." Local Primary School



PEOPLE & PARTNERSHIPS

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are essential to the running of the Farm.

Over the year we engaged 122 people aged 18+ who volunteered on a regular basis. The majority lived within a few miles of the Farm and they all told us of the tremendous benefit their time at the Farm has had on their physical and mental health, as well as being able to meet other people in their community.

An additional 40 adults attended on a drop in basis, through our evening Farm Gym group or via the organisation GoodGym on weekend afternoons.

We also engaged 39 work experience students in animal care placements.

Together volunteers and work experience students contributed over 12,000 hours of their time over the year.

TRAINING PROJECTS FOR ADULTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES

We deliver a range of training projects for adult students with learning disabilities. Students attend on a weekly basis in projects that develop practical skills in animal care, cooking and crafts, gardening and retail.

The projects also enable development of social and life skills. Training takes place in the public environment of the Farm, ensuring visitors witness the skills and contribution our talented students have to offer.

There is a real sense of team work and most importantly, our projects are fun!

GARDENING FOR WELLBEING

In response to the increase in reported mental ill health, particularly following the pandemic, we established a new partnership project with Southwark Wellbeing Hub. They refer participants to our weekly 'Gardening for Wellbeing' sessions which have proved hugely popular and beneficial to all involved. This has now become part of our core weekly offer.

PEOPLE & PARTNERSHIPS



"I've experienced the change of seasons as and when they happen. It has been like that sea breeze that makes you good, both physically and mentally. Gardening brings purpose and a sense of responsibility. It's about getting your hands dirty, whilst learning on the way... and you might even harvest some veggies!"
Gardening Participant



"The Farm garden has been a safe and welcoming space. It's a place to come to each week where I can be exactly who I am, and feel exactly the way I'm feeling. We all learn with and from each other; whether that's in the garden, sharing recipes for the food we have collectively grown or in discussing the situations we are facing in our lives."
Gardening for Wellbeing Participant

FINANCE

OPERATING RESULTS

In this financial year we were still feeling the impact of the pandemic on our income generation potential. We used to budget for 70% funding to come from income generation and 30% from grants to keep our community projects free to access. The Farm's funding model has not reverted back as yet, largely due to the impact of the Omicron wave over the Winter period and as such we were still relying heavily on grant support.

We received a total income of £396,872 in the financial year. This income was made up of 48% restricted grants and 52% unrestricted income, which includes unrestricted grants and furlough contributions.

Our turnover in a normal year is around £475,000. The prior year was an unusual year with income over £600k, thanks to significant capital grants for site upgrades and improvements. This year was lower as we slowly rebuilt after the pandemic and didn't have any capital grant investments.

A breakdown of the Farm's operating costs for this financial year is shown below:

Operating Income			Operating Expenditure		
Restricted Grants	£189,442	48%	Salaries & on costs	£295,803	76%
Personal Budgets	£79,754	20%	Premises	£20,065	5%
Sales & Fees	£54,138	14%	Administration	£17,771	5%
Rent	£24,300	6%	Livestock	£29,440	8%
Donations	£20,212	5%	Project Costs	£26,472	7%
Unrestricted Grants	£18,000	5%			
Furlough	£11,027	3%			
Total Income	£396,872		Total Expenditure	£389,551	

FINANCE

Donations were gratefully received and totalled £20,212 that were mainly from generous local supporters and visitors. The Management Committee and staff team would like to send a special thanks to everyone who has continued to support us and ensure the future of the Farm.

Despite rising costs, particularly with animal feed, the staff team carefully controlled costs and as such before accounting treatments had been applied, the total expenditure for the financial year was £389,551.

This results in a small operating surplus of £7,321.

ACCOUNTING RESULTS

After accounting treatments (including fixed asset depreciation and disposals, holiday pay accruals and a water bill credit) the Farm's financial statements show a total expenditure of £462,769 (2021: £585,333).

This results in a subsequent loss of £65,897.

The accounting treatments that have the biggest impact are the significant depreciation charges of £73,871 as a result of the Riverfront Development which although fully grant funded needed to be capitalised as a fixed asset.

Overall we have had a successful financial year. We were able to increase our free unrestricted reserves in line with the reserves policy, whilst continuing to support and serve many more people from our local community and beyond.

For full details of the Farm's finances, please see the accompanying document: 'Surrey Docks Provident Society Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2022'

THANK YOU

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The Farm is governed by a team of unpaid volunteers who meet on a monthly basis to steer the direction and guide the organisation.

Thanks to: Brett Bennett-Smith, Chair; Matthew White, Secretary; Jolin Holme, Treasurer; Mary Budd, Alan Chadborn, Rosemary Petronis and Andrew Tipler

STAFF TEAM

Thanks to our dedicated staff team:

Gemma Hooper, Manager
Claire Elson, Livestock Manager
Lucy Tarver-Jones, Youth Manager
James Taylor, Horticulture Manager
Tracey Neil, Education Manager
Melisha Khyriem-Edwards, Finance Officer
Rachel Smith and Pat Lipscombe, Training Coordinators
Rebecca Clarke, Green Mentor
Fay McMath and Jessica Thompson, Livestock Workers
Sarah Hartley, Jo Baden-Morgan, Andrew Kerr, Sabrina Siotto, Youth Workers
Christopher Simmonds and Siobhain Yates, Livestock Apprentices
Caty Palmer and Kate McKinney, Horticulture Apprentices
Cecil Lee, Cleaner

VOLUNTEERS

Surrey Docks Farm is lucky to have a team of committed volunteers who contribute to the running of all areas of the Farm; including animal care, gardening, maintenance, serving customers in our farm shop and assisting in the delivery of our community projects. Along with their hard work volunteers bring ideas, enthusiasm and a wide range of skills.

Volunteers are essential to the Farm, we simply wouldn't exist without them!

THANK YOU

FUNDERS

Surrey Docks Farm would like to send our thanks to the funders who have supported the organisation this year contributing to both delivery and core costs.

These funders include:

Southwark Council, City Bridge Trust, National Lottery, Jack Petchey Foundation, British Land, The Farmers Company, Amicable Society Rotherhithe, RHS, Team London Bridge, Co-op Local Community Fund, Wakefield & Tetley Trust, Lloyd's Market Charity Awards, United St Saviour's Charity, London Youth, Albion Street Community Charity Ltd and several more.



THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS

Thank you to our community, who have supported the Farm by championing and promoting our work, fundraising on our behalf, buying produce from our shop and generously donating.