

Update March 2021

This bulletin covers the January-March period of 2021 and as the first update of the year will detail how the Social Farming Support Service for Northern Ireland is continuing to support farmers and promote Social Farming. Please visit the Social Farming section of the Rural Support website: www.ruralsupport.org.uk or follow Rural Support on social media (Twitter: @RuralSupport; Facebook: Rural Support) to keep up to date on developments. You can also contact the Social Farming Service Coordinator on the details below.

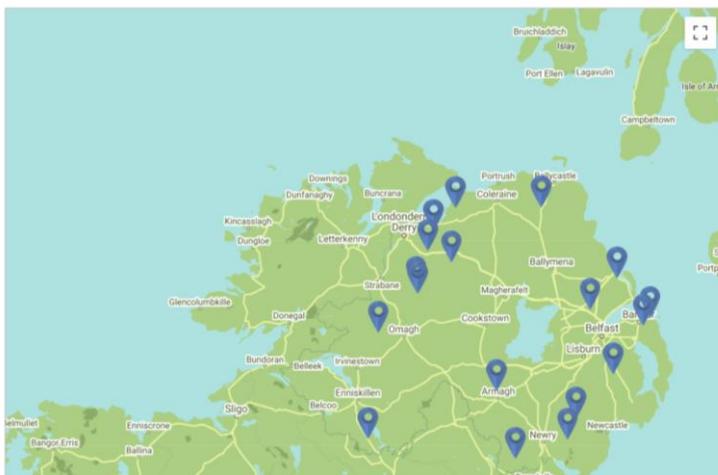
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Social Farming Delivery

Find A Social Farm



During the January-March period, Social Farming continued on farms across Northern Ireland. Farmers ensured that sessions were delivered in line with COVID-19 restrictions and protection measures. As winter went on, the planning for the brighter and better weather on the farms was a big focus. Rural Support's Social Farming Support Service assisted farmers in their delivery and provided relevant training opportunities. The key aim for the year ahead will be to promote opportunities on existing and new farms across Northern Ireland for those who could benefit from participation in Social Farming.

Social Farming Promotion

Rural Support continue to promote the efforts of Social Farmers across Northern Ireland, showcasing their commitment to delivery and the innovative service they offer. It was a busy time on farms with the normal winter/spring activities and farmers were involved in initiatives such as the NI Science Festival.

Also over the first months of 2021, An Tobar featured on the BBC TV programme Beidh Aonach Amárach and Jubilee Farm showcased their 2020 farming year in the UTV programme Rare Breed. These features promoted Social Farming to the wider public and generated positive feedback on the service provided by these farming families.

Promotion is key to spreading the message of Social Farming and the benefits it offers and Rural Support will support farmers to share their farm stories.

SoEngage Plus Project



SoEngage Plus training output

During January-March, Rural Support were busy contributing as a partner to the Erasmus+ funded SoEngage Plus project. The first focus of the project is to produce training for farmers on using videos to promote their Social Farming services.

Farmers delivering or preparing to deliver a Social Farming service here in Northern Ireland will be supported by Rural Support to use this training and make videos to tell their farm story. Videos produced will feature on the project website, www.soengage.eu, and updates on the project will be included in further 2021 newsletters.

Introduction to Social Farming



Farmer Experience

- An Tobar, Silverbridge
- Behind the Stable Door, Bangor

Rural Support delivered an Introduction to Social Farming course in early March. This was an opportunity for farmers interested in delivering Social Farming to get an overview of what's involved. A key part of the course was the input from two active farmers who detailed their experience of delivering Social Farming. Margaret Finnegan from An Tobar Social Farm and Wellness Centre in Co. Armagh and Clare Cannon from Behind the Stable Door in Co. Down provided an important insight into how they integrate Social Farming into their farming week. The course attendees benefitted from learning about their experience and the chance to ask questions to probe further.

Please get in touch with Rural Support to learn more about Social Farming