



**Social  
Farming  
Support  
Service**



**Rural  
Support**

# NEWSLETTER

**JULY - DECEMBER 2023**

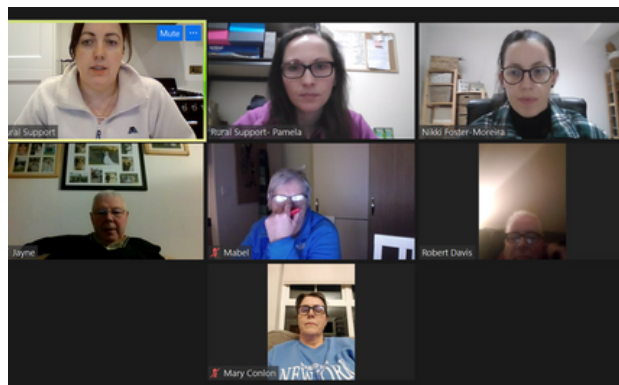
**This newsletter will detail how the Social Farming Support Service for Northern Ireland is continuing to support farmers and promoting Social Farming. The second part of the year has been busy as usual, have a look below at some of the highlights.**

## Delivery Roundup

There are currently 18 active Social Farms across Northern Ireland. These farms deliver 31 sessions per week to approximately 85 participants. 3 farms have moved out of pilot delivery and into a contract arrangement in the Northern area. Bradkeel Farm in the Western area has recommenced delivery 1 day per week for individuals from mental health services.

We are also working with 45+ new farms to prepare for delivery in 2024.

## Training



### **SOCIAL FARMING DISCUSSION GROUP MEETING**

The Social Farms come together quarterly to share learning and offer each other peer support. The final meeting of 2023 was held online with a range of topics covered. The next meeting will be hosted on a Social Farm in the New Year.

The next set of training courses will be delivered in the January to March period of 2024, including:

- Emergency First Aid at Work
- Sageguarding Children and Adults
- Cyber security

## SOCIAL FARMING AWARENESS WEEK

Social Farming Awareness Week took place in October, featuring five farm visits across Northern Ireland. Social Farming took over our social media channels for the week, there was also a segment on BBC Sounds and a number of press articles.



### Bradkeel Farm, Plumbridge

Mabel Campbell hosted the first visit of the week, those who attended got stuck in with some examples of horticultural activities that happen on the farm, we also had a tour of the farm with details of some projects in the pipeline.

### An Tobar Farm, Silverbridge

On the Tuesday we were hosted by sisters Kathleen and Margaret, and two of their participants. A very informative tour from a farm steeped in history.



### Jigsaw Farm, Coagh

One of our newer Social Farms took the opportunity to showcase the great work they have done to date. A big thanks to Phelim and Joanne for showing everyone around.

### McDermott's Farm, Armagh

Just on the outskirts of the town Seaghan and Joanne took the time to show their offering to participants. With allotments, camping pitches, and a woodland onsite activities are very varied.



### Wingrove Farm, Saintfield

Our final visit was with Jayne and Robert Burgess just outside Saintfield. The 3 participants enjoyed showing everyone around and demonstrated examples of the work they get involved in weekly.



## SOUTH EAST REGIONAL SOCIAL CARE FARMERS CONFERENCE

Aoibheann travelled to Bore Place Farm in Kent to give the keynote address at the South East Regional Social Care Farmers conference in late October. This was an opportunity to tell the story of Rural Support's Social Farming Support Service, connect with others in the sector, and learn about the educational visits for young people delivered on-site. We hope to collaborate with this region of the UK further in our shared purpose of developing the provision of Social Farming.



The SFSS hosted a stand at Sandelford School transition information evening in Coleraine. Pupils could find out about opportunities available to them when they leave education, it was great to speak with prospective Social Farmers. SFSS will be attending more outreach events like this going forward into 2024.



Ulster Farmers' Union featured Laurelview and Magennis' Farm in a podcast in August. Click the photo to listen.

Have you listened in yet? 🎧  
The... - Ulster Farmers' Union  
Have you listened in yet? 🎧

# Social Farming Standards



A Social Farming Standards panel meeting was held in September for another three farms. Those who have been successful will be announced in early 2024.

The day also marked two farms achieving the Social Farming Standards badge. Well done to An Tobar Farm and Jigsaw Farm (pictured left).

## Contact Us



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