



# Landlords' AGM 2024

## at Fordhall Organic Farm



Involving *you* in our  
farming future

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of shareholders of the Fordhall Community Land Initiative will be held at 10.30am on Saturday 27th April 2024 in person and via Zoom, by order of the Society Secretary, Charlotte Hollins.

## AGM AGENDA

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**10.00** Registration open

**10.30** Welcome and start of online session

**10.40** AGM

1. Welcome and Apologies
2. To approve the Minutes of the AGM held on 23rd April 2022
3. Election of Board Members
4. Treasurer's Report, followed by Q & A
5. Resolution: To adopt the Annual Accounts for the year ending Dec 2023
6. Resolution: To adopt auditors for the year ending Dec 2024
7. Chairman's Report and FCLI Strategy update
8. Any other business

**12.00** End of formal AGM

**12.05** Update from your tenant farmer, Ben Hollins, followed by Q & A

**12.45** End of live streaming. Lunch break.

**13.30** Consultation: Strategy for the next decade - what does it look like? (onsite only)

**15.00** Close plenary sessions and summary of the day

**15.15** Close of day's activities.

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**16.00** Film showing - Six Inches of Soil (open to members of the public)

**17.45** Panel discussion, run by the Shropshire Good Food Partnership

**18.30** Break & farm walk

**19.00** Two-course Fordhall Feast



**REMEMBER - THIS  
IS YOUR VOTE!**  
*Please return your  
ballot paper enclosed to  
the office.*

Jamie, Marie-Anne, Isabelle and Ben Hollins with baby Lily, born March 1st at Fordhall Farm.







# SIX INCHES OF SOIL

Fundraising Event

Includes a raffle & exciting prizes!



## Special Screening by **Fordhall** Community Land Initiative

### *An inspirational farming story*

In collaboration with the 'Shropshire Good Food Partnership', we are proud to be one of the few UK locations to screen this inspirational *'story of British farmers standing up against the industrial food system, and transforming the way they produce food'*.

Tickets include screening entry, local expert discussion panel and a two-course meal.

### *Event details & bookings*

**Saturday 27th April, 4pm-9pm, £25pp**

Pre-booking is essential to avoid disappointment.

Call 01630 638 696 or visit

[www.fordhallfarm.com/soil-screening](http://www.fordhallfarm.com/soil-screening)



Fordhall Organic Farm, Market Drayton, Shropshire, TF9 3PS

# Your Board Members of 2023

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**Christine Tate. FCLI Chairperson. MBA, Social Citizenship Consultant, Director of Partnerships for Good. Retiring at AGM 2024**

I work with commercial and not-for-profit organisations creating partnerships across sectors to design and deliver community benefit programmes. I have been a Board Member at FCLI since 2012, and Chair for the past six years. I enjoy visiting and volunteering, being a part of the everyday life at Fordhall.

I have thoroughly enjoyed being a Board Member and Chair, I love being with people at Fordhall who live the values and welcome everyone from all walks of life. I am very proud of how we supported people through the pandemic and continue to support so many, during these difficult times. I am keen to continue using my skills and experience to support the progress of FCLI wherever I can. Helping it to tackle the social, environmental and economic challenges we are all faced with.



**Paul Austin. Treasurer. Retired Business Manager**

With a Master's Degree in Business Management and HND in Hospitality, I worked for Lloyds Banking Group for 25 years, where I covered many roles and gained experience in Finance, Risk Management, Budgetary Control and Project Management. My final role was Regional Manager which I held for eight years.

I now have two organic allotments in Market Drayton and am Secretary of the local Allotment Association. I champion organic principles as well as no-dig and love increasing biodiversity at every opportunity. I have been a Business Connector for King Charles's Business in the Community Charity. I have a broad range of skills and communications experience that, together with being very local, I hope enhances and supports current initiatives and develop future projects and growth.



**Shropshire Wildlife Trust**  
A representative: currently **John Hughes, recently retired Development Manager.**

Shropshire Wildlife Trust holds a number of reserves in the county and does a huge amount of work in education and promoting the value of green space. It is particularly interested in creating examples of farming in partnership with wildlife and biodiversity.



**Fordhall Organic Farm**

A representative from the tenant farmer: currently **Ben Hollins.** Having grown up at Fordhall, I now manage the organic land and

livestock at Fordhall Farm, and am keen to promote the business as sustainable and educational. I love working on the farm and assisting the FCLI with its future development.



**Mike Foy, OBE. Board Governance Lead. MBA. FCIQB. FCSI. Department for Education. Retiring at AGM 2024**

I am currently the Senior Vice President of the Chartered Institute of Building. I am also a Fellow of the Chartered Management Institute. My working life has been spent mainly in the public sector – both Local and National Government. I was Director of three different Local Authority departments and then Assistant Chief Executive. I have, in the last ten years, worked for the Department for Education leading a multi-disciplinary team responsible for developing new schools throughout the Midlands and North West of England. I was awarded an OBE for Services to Education in the 2017 New Year's Honours.



**Lucy Dowley. Director of Sustainability for Europe, Water and Environment Team, Jacobs.**

With a First Class MSc (Hons) in Countryside Management, I was the Head of Land Strategy for United Utilities (the largest corporate land owner in England), and accountable for setting the strategy and plans for the company's 56,000ha of land holdings. I have

worked in strategy and innovation for the last decade within the regulatory landscape, building partnerships in the private and third sector. I have recently delivered partnership projects for net zero carbon, access to nature, enhancements to biodiversity and land based/green skills, working very closely with local communities, tenant farmers, land owners, local authorities, regulators and stakeholders at all scales.

I moved to Shropshire in 2017. We quickly found Fordhall Farm and immediately fell in love with it.



**Tim Reeves. Smallholder and retired land-based teacher.**

I began my career in agriculture, progressing into a variety of teaching roles. During my first ten years of teaching at Reaseheath Agricultural College, I taught dairy husbandry and business management. In 2000 I became Head of Department in Adventure Sports and developed several courses in outdoor education within the leisure industry. I was also responsible for managing the safety of adventurous activities and training of staff.

I took early retirement in 2018, and we currently live on a small farm running a pedigree flock of Shropshire sheep on a grass-based farming system. I have always had an interest in sustainable farming, and I believe that Fordhall Farm is an excellent showcase to demonstrate how we can live in parallel with nature and demonstrate a sustainable farming system.



**Dominic Pinto. Skipper, Pirate Castle, London**

Following my first visit to Fordhall some 14 years ago, I have been hooked. I have volunteered with large events at the farm, from set-up, through delivery to pack-up. I continue to enjoy offering my support at volunteer weekends.

I have a track record in business, SMEs, charities, fundraising, community engagement and development of the outdoors (through my work with Inland Waterways and London community development). I was a member of the London and South-East Advisory Board, and its predecessor the London Partnership, for the Canal and River Trust,

and I remain an active community narrowboat skipper, coach and mentor for the Pirate Castle, Camden, London. I have served as a critical non-executive director of a housing association, Merton Priory Homes, a large SE London provider, part of what became Clarion Housing.



**The Revd Lesley McNeil. Retired Minister.**

I know that the only viable future for this planet depends on humans respecting nature and working with it rather than against it. This is what Fordhall does, and I want to be part of our future development, taking it to the next level.

I have done a lot of my food shopping at Fordhall since I moved to Market Drayton fifteen years ago and I often use Arthur's Farm Kitchen. Because I have mobility problems I can't walk around the farm, but I do bring ideas about how Fordhall can involve disabled people in every way, ensuring we remain an inclusive farm for everyone.



**Bill McAllister-Lovatt. Director. Self employed.**

I am a pragmatic and personable business leader, who drives and inspires natural change, inspired by balanced ecosystems. I am seasoned in delivering strategic transformational development programmes across major organisations within the public and private sectors, that impact individual progress, team dynamics and multiple bottom-line performance. I understand the importance of asking the right questions when it comes to solving problems and delivering solutions, and I am not afraid of challenging when it's in the best interest of an organisation and its stakeholders.

I have been a shareholder since the start of the Fordhall campaign, believing that the land is one of the most important factors in our health and wellbeing.



**Will Dennis. Group Head of Sustainability, The Bamford Collection.**

Following over a decade working in retail, in 2017 I joined Daylesford



Organic, a farm shop and hospitality business based on an organic farm in the Cotswolds. I love data and currently lead the business's carbon assessments and on-site renewables projects, securing an award for our low-carbon farm-to-shelf merino wool collection. I am also responsible for our education programmes having now hosted 450 primary school children, teaching them about ecosystems, the origin of their food and the benefits of organic. I am an environmentalist motivated by inspiring others to take small actions in the fight against climate change and preserving our countryside. Moreover, I am driven by educating young minds to inspire future generations and make nature accessible to everyone. I am actively involved with industry bodies including the Soil Association, B-Corp, and the Organic Trade Board.

## Board Members Standing for Re-Election

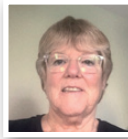


**Jack Tavernor. Estate Manager, Powis Castle Estate. Chair of the Estates Management sub group.**

I am a rural practice Chartered Surveyor, grew up near to Fordhall and worked on many of the local farms. I took a degree in Rural Enterprise and Land Management at Harper Adams and I'm now the Estate Manager for the Powis Castle Estate on the Shropshire/Powys border, which extends to some 15,000 acres and includes 60 farms, 175 houses, commercial property and 1,500 acres of forestry. I'm also CEO of Ludlow Castle, which is run as a tourist attraction, event and wedding venue and has self-catering accommodation, shop and a cafe.

Previously I was a Partner with national property consultants Strutt & Parker and have recently realised a dream of buying a farm as a forever home with my wife and two girls. I have been a Board Member from the very beginning of FCLI and I am currently Chair of the Estates Management sub group.

## New Members Standing for Election



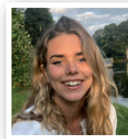
**Sue Walker. Retired business owner.**

I have been office bound all of my working life, encompassing all that is needed to provide an efficient working environment. This has covered invoicing, wages, credit notes and letter writing. At FCLI's inception I purchased shares. I did not want to see what had been started by Ben and Charlotte's parents go for nothing. My husband and I ran a sustainable business together, Ecosac, supplying compostable bags and sacks made from corn starch. These are still in use in the Farm Shop today.

I am very practical and enjoy gardening. I am able to deal easily with people and problems. I think my experience gives me a very broad spectrum for Fordhall to select my best services. I have also been regularly volunteering in the Fordhall office, which has increased my understanding of the organisation considerably.

I am committed to the environment and do what I can to help protect the future of our world. The ethos and ethics of Fordhall encompass all that is good. From the sale, the treatment and rearing of its animals, to the way staff and members are involved with its progress.

I am now on the committee of the U3A Cultural Visits. I am treasurer of the Hodnet School PTA and am an active member of the Market Drayton Royal British Legion.



**Sian Gatenby. Coach, leader, carer, activist**

It would be a true honour to be on the Board of Directors at Fordhall. With such a strength and passion in its community, it would be a privilege to add my skills, and love, to the mix.

I am the Founder and Director of We Can Change the World, a sustainability education and consultancy organisation; I am the Co-Founder and Director of the creative liberation collective, Nuin; I am an Advisory Board Member supporting the

# Directors' Financial Report 2023

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During the period, the Fordhall Community Land Initiative Limited (referred to from here as the Society) continued its work to benefit the community and natural environment. Following on from its work on climate and impact measure, the Society focused the year on celebrations through food with a focus on the health and wellbeing of people and planet. A key aim remains to restore connections between hearts, minds and the soil to encourage and create meaningful change, which helps build health and resilience within people and planet. Following the global turmoil of 2022, there remains a cost-of-living crisis and the Society had forecast a loss for 2023, although the Society is happy to report that this loss is less than originally forecast due to the generosity of our members and the strong trading activities and community projects the Society continues to run.

The Society leases the farmland, house, Dutch barn, farm shop and butchery to tenant farmers Charlotte and Ben Hollins, but retains the other buildings for use by the Society to fulfil its charitable objects. Some buildings have been erected onsite by the tenant as tenants' improvements and do not belong to the Society. The Society facilitates free community access to facilities at the farm through free farm trails, cafe and a picnic area.

The Society ran several events that helped to promote awareness of food, farming, heritage and the environment, with a focus on seasonal celebrations including Solstice and Samhain, with support from the Shropshire Good Food Partnership.

A grant from Children in Need and Big Lottery's Reaching Communities programme gratefully continues to support the vital delivery of the Youth Project, which supports vulnerable young people three days a week. This alternative provision supports their life skills, confidence, builds trust with adults and builds connections to nature and the landscape for some of our most vulnerable young people.

strategic vision and innovation agenda of executive search and leadership development organisation, The Good Board; and I am a Coach, Musician, Artist, and Philosopher. I have an immense passion and endless curiosity for humans and our connection to self, each other and our beautiful planet. My mission is to empower these connections.

My work has largely been with individual leaders and organisations to shift their cultural narrative into connection with these three aspects of us: self, community, planet. I believe diversity in all places, and in all ways, creates life. I have worked in many different ways to support the diversification of ideas, people and power. Empowering farmers to work in harmony with land and community is essential, and Fordhall is a beaming beacon of it.



**Sarasue McAllister-Lovatt.**  
**Psychotherapist and counsellor.**

I am a trained psychotherapist, counsellor and businesswoman who is used to adapting quickly and efficiently to different environments in years of contract work. I have recently updated my skills with an ILM level 5 in leadership and management. I have been a keen plantswoman all my life with a special interest in sustainable farming, edible landscapes, permaculture and forest gardening. One of my other interests is international cuisine, and I once worked as a head chef. I love feeding others and creating new dishes.

I remember reading about the Fordhall Community Land Initiative when it was first being created and loved the idea. Having supported and worked with many disadvantaged individuals over many years I particularly appreciate the inclusive and varied nature of the many challenging and worthwhile projects that are ongoing. I have been following the community's progress since its inception, and I now wish to deepen my relationship with the Fordhall community and feel my years of varied experience can be a great asset to the Board.

My husband is already on the Board of Directors, and I have previously taken every chance to support him in his work at Fordhall.

The Care Farm has also thrived, with demand outstripping supply. This project provides a valuable life-changing service to adults with learning disabilities four days a week. Additional sessions funded by Shropshire Council delivered activities that nurtured connections to nature and the landscape such as drumming workshops, natural crafts and outdoor cooking.

Work with members of the local community struggling with isolation and loneliness continued with funds raised through the Appeal for Change. These funds were used to support green Social Prescribing activities such as gardening on a weekly basis. Working with GP link workers, sessions were offered to members of the local community. This work was supported by a grant from the Country Landowners Association (CLA).

The Society remains incredibly grateful for all the donations and grant funding received during the period, which has allowed it to expand its reach further within our community and through conservation projects onsite.

Funds from reserves were allocated during the period towards a number of capital projects including continued restoration of the farmhouse (structural wall repairs, doors and windows), equipment purchase for Arthur's Farm Kitchen, and investment to improve our climate resilience. The bulk of the latter was used to install solar thermal technology into the Old Dairy building to reduce our heating requirements. This adds to the air source heat pump that was installed in the previous year into the Straw Lodge onsite. Further funds were used to measure the microbiology of the soils onsite, helping the Society to learn about its impacts and put measures in place to mitigate its environmental and climate impact.

Due to the desire from members to invest in this work, the Society planted 200 metres of foraging hedgerow, the start of a silvopasture project onsite: planting for wildlife, livestock and people. An appeal was run later in the year, successfully raising over £27,000, which will be spent on planting more trees at Fordhall over the coming years.

The Society remains dedicated to the campaign

to regain the 12-acre Cottage Field as part of the working organic farm, and continues to investigate avenues to make this possible when the opportunity arises. Funds received towards Cottage Field remain ringfenced to support this activity. The Society is investigating the possibility of other land acquisition to support farming livelihoods into the future.

During the period several shareholders converted their shareholding into donations to the value of £7,950 (2022 £8,000). Further members requested they withdraw their shares, although most of these were due to the death of members. The total withdrawn was £3,900 (2022 £7,700). Interest-free loans converted to donations during the period amounted to £1,000 (2022 £200) and no outstanding loans (2022 £3,350) were repaid to members. The remaining loans owing during the period were gratefully extended interest-free, for a further period by members. The Society welcomed 49 new members during the period, with a total shareholding of £3,200 (2022 £25,200).

Following a number of years of generating a surplus, the Society made a planned operating deficit for the period of £22,903 (2022 planned deficit £38,431). As at 31st December 2023, the Society had cash resources of £414,849 (2021 £323,472), which will allow the continued work of the Society. The Board believes that, to be responsible, it should hold no less than six months' running costs in the bank (which equates to £125,000) and it should aim to have no more than 12 months in reserves (£250,000). After removal of restricted funds (£174,616), the Society has accessible reserves of £240,233, which is below its maximum reserve's threshold.

The Board of Directors is reviewing the use of the FCLI reserves over the six-month minimum threshold to ensure the long-term security of the Society. The proposals under review in 2024 include the purchase of additional farmland as well as further restoration of the farmhouse, resulting in a planned deficit for the 2024 year.

The Board of Directors has allocated specific funds for spend during the 2024 period of £74,136. These



# Postal Ballot Paper

You can complete online at [fordhallfarm.com/AGM2024](http://fordhallfarm.com/AGM2024)



All individual or group members of the FCLI can vote.

1. This year we have an uncontested election. Please state if you are happy for the following members to be elected. *Full biographies can be found in the enclosed booklet. \*Denotes re-election*

Jack Tavernor\*  Yes  No  Abstain      Sian Gatenby  Yes  No  Abstain

Sue Walker  Yes  No  Abstain      Sarasue McAllister-Lovatt  Yes  No  Abstain

2. **Resolution:** For the adoption of the Annual Accounts for the year ending December 2023.






Yes, I am in favour of adopting the annual accounts       No, I am against adopting the annual accounts       Abstain

3. **Resolution:** For the adoption of Howsons as the auditors for the Society accounts year ending December 2024.

Yes, I am in favour of adopting Howsons       No, I am against adopting Howsons       Abstain

N.B. If you would like to see full copies of the accounts before placing your vote then please contact the office.

## Member Consultation - Our Strategic Direction

IMPACT AREA	PLEDGE
 <b>SUSTAIN</b> LIVELIHOODS ON THE LAND	To forever work in partnership with nature and our tenant farmer, protecting our soil to provide sustainable food and livelihoods.
 <b>EXPERIENCE</b> NATURE	To create and maintain inclusive connections between people and nature to improve well-being, leaving lasting memories and understanding.
 <b>NURTURE</b> OUR PLANET	To minimise our climatic impact, whilst also enhancing our natural environment to build resilience and support biodiversity.
 <b>NOURISH</b> BODIES & MINDS	To provide and promote healthy, nutritious food using local, seasonal produce and encourage responsible eating choices through education.
 <b>INSPIRE</b> OTHERS	To share our story and expertise, empowering people to adopt an ecosystem approach to food, land management and community ownership.

Yes, I am in favour of adopting the new impact areas and pledges

No, I am against adopting the new impact areas and pledges

Please share any comments on the proposed impact areas and pledges:

## Landlords' AGM 2024 Attendance Details



Full Shareholder Name(s) (please use capitals) .....

Email Address .....

Phone number ..... Post Code.....

Will you be attending the AGM?  Yes  No Do you need seats close to speakers? Yes / No

If attending, will it be in-person or online?  In-person  Online No. of attendees .....

All online AGM attendees will be sent joining instructions at least three days prior to the event

Dietary requirements.....

Accessible car parking required?  Yes  No

**Donate:** I enclose a donation of £.....

*giftaid it*

I am a UK taxpayer and pay an amount of Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax at least equal to the tax that can be claimed on my donations (25% of the donation). Please treat all donations I've made during the past four years and all donations I make in the future as Gift Aid donations until I notify you otherwise.

Yes  No  **Signature:**.....



### Six Inches of Soil Film Screening Booking

Saturday 27th April, 4pm - 9pm, £25.00 per person

Limited to 50 places (in person only)

**Booking request:** I would like ..... tickets @ £25 per person

Total Cost £.....

Donation included of £.....

I enclose a cheque for £..... or book online [www.fordhallfarm.com/soil-screening](http://www.fordhallfarm.com/soil-screening)

**Accommodation:** I am interested in overnight accommodation in the Straw Lodge

**Tickets:** There are no physical tickets; we will email to confirm all booked places. Please ensure you provide your email address in the above Member Details section. Tickets are sold on a first come, first served basis and are non-refundable.

**Please send completed forms to:** FCLI AGM, Fordhall Organic Farm, Tern Hill Road, Market Drayton, TF9 3PS or email your vote and note of attendance to [project@fordhallfarm.com](mailto:project@fordhallfarm.com)  
All voting papers will be treated confidentially. For enquiries call us on 01630 638696

allocated funds from reserves will be used towards addressing the climate and ecological emergency, silvopasture tree planting, farmhouse restoration, investment in a new website and a new member database, as well as other small capital projects that will further the Society's charitable objectives and secure its future in the long-term.

When 'restricted' (that contractually restricted for a sole use) funds (£174,616) and 'allocated' (agreed for a specific spend by the Board of Directors) funds (£74,136) are removed, the FCLI has available free-cash reserves of £166,097 forecast for the 2024 year-end, which remains within the Board's target threshold.

All fundraising for the Society for the year ending December 2023 was conducted by FCLI staff with the support of onsite volunteers. Fundraising activities and approach are monitored closely to ensure best practice is adhered to and that vulnerable people are not targeted or pressurised into giving money or property to the Society. No complaints regarding its fundraising procedures were received during the period.

In an ever-changing global climate, the Board is extremely conscious of the current problems we are facing. It is committed to reducing its impacts where possible as well as looking to ways it can share knowledge and influence behaviours with others. With this in mind, the Board is looking to broaden the influence the Society has, both through the consultancy it offers other groups and through its support of the We're Right Here campaign for a Community Power Act.

The external impact of global pressures and the current cost-of-living crisis have been considered by the Board and the tenant farmer. The Society expects this to increase costs of delivery during the 2024 period, especially due to the large rises in national living wage, and has budgeted accordingly. The Board places a high value on its staff members, recognising that it is their quality of delivery and passion for Fordhall which keeps everything moving smoothly. The Board considers their well-being a priority and is providing investment to support this as much as we can afford to do.

The 2024 budget is sufficiently flexible that if legacy or new grant income is not forthcoming, activities can be modified/reduced accordingly, cutting its cloth to suit the finances available.

	2023 (£)	2022 (£)
<b>OPERATING INCOME</b>		
Merchandise	865	633
Property rental	19,500	16,300
Events & courses	2,871	7,510
Education	131,425	111,099
Arthur's Farm Kitchen	182,914	171,159
Newsletter	19,174	16,539
Gifts & donations	41,974	49,364
- Legacy income	1,235	21,302
Gift Aid	37,592	9,167
Grants	33,958	56,028
Other income	1,612	1,302
Consultancy	5,475	5,121
Yurts & Straw Lodge	33,452	29,282
<b>TOTAL Income</b>	<b>512,047</b>	<b>494,806</b>

### OPERATING COSTS

#### Costs of generating funds

Merchandise	801	366
Events & courses	5,569	7,797
Advertising & marketing	5,724	7,632
Project delivery	13,505	21,203
Education materials	14,560	13,699
Arthur's FK purchases	64,582	66,270

#### Management and Administration

Staff salaries, NIC & pension	314,840	294,265
Travel	1,617	1,902
Printing & office supplies	20,345	14,976
Accountancy & audit	4,315	4,000
Heat & light	7,765	9,199
Insurance & rates	11,723	12,291
Repairs & maintenance	9,805	23,360
Telephone & internet	679	696
Subscriptions	1,303	1,306
Bank charges	1,991	1,639
Legal & professional	1,401	2,151
Staff training & welfare	5,653	5,782
Sundry expenses	458	1,106
Depreciation	44,032	37,755
Unrecoverable VAT	4,282	5,842

**Total Costs** (534,950) (533,237)

**Operating Surplus** (22,903) (38,431)

Other Interest receivable 4,699 1,465

Interest payable (1,471) (1,310)

**(Surplus/Deficit)** (19,675) (38,276)

### Auditor's Report

In our opinion the financial statements: give a true and fair view of the state of the Society's affairs as at 31st December 2023 and of its income and expenditure for the year then ended; and have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and are in accordance with the requirements of the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014.

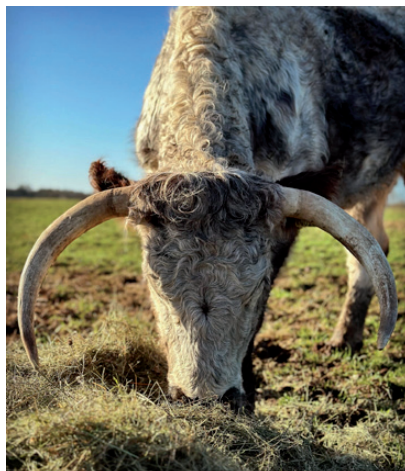


The Board is reviewing the long-term strategy for the Fordhall Community Land Initiative. This is being informed via member surveys and consultation at the upcoming AGM, ensuring the Society remains relevant, sustainable and has a seat at the table for change.

Funding from grants received in 2022 was released from restricted funds and spent during the period. Similarly, some grant income received in 2023 has been placed into restricted funds at the year-end for activity to take place in 2024.

During the period new grants were awarded and received from:

- British Gas – £2,257.89 Feed-in tariff (2022 £1,868.77)
- BBC Children in Need - £10,000 Youth Project (2022: £10,500)
- Big Lottery: Reaching Communities - £20,000 (2022: £25,000)
- CLA Charitable Foundation - £3,500 Social prescribing sessions for mental health and wellbeing
- Shropshire Good Food Partnership - £1,000 Seasonal community celebrations around food



## Balance Sheet 31st December 2023

	2023 (£)	2022 (£)
<b><u>Fixed assets</u></b>		
Tangible Assets	1,372,380	1,388,536
<b><u>Current assets</u></b>		
Stocks	5,617	5,118
Debtors	26,130	32,885
Cash at bank and in hand	414,849	323,757
<b><u>Creditors: falling due within one year</u></b>	<u>(194,782)</u>	<u>(70,706)</u>
<b><u>Net current assets</u></b>	251,814	291,054
<b><u>Total assets less current liabilities</u></b>	1,624,194	1,679,590
<b><u>Creditors: falling due after one year</u></b>	(27,457)	(54,528)
<b><u>Net assets</u></b>	<b><u>1,596,737</u></b>	<b><u>1,625,062</u></b>
<b><u>Capital and reserves</u></b>		
Share capital	14,238	14,411
Share premium account	697,662	706,139
Income and expenditure account	884,837	904,512
<b><u>SHAREHOLDERS' FUNDS</u></b>	<b><u>1,596,737</u></b>	<b><u>1,625,062</u></b>

# Consultation results: Fordhall's Legacy and Future Direction

Over the last 12-18-months we have been consulting with you, our staff and our customers on our future strategy. In December of 2022 we sent out an email survey which was followed up with a postal survey in the spring. This is what you said:

## What should our legacy be?

You said (ranked in order of preference):

**1. To have a viable working organic farm, supporting a long-term tenant farmer and working with nature**

*Overwhelming number of members choosing this as their top priority*

**2. To be a centre of education on organic food and farming. A strong second**

**3. To be a restorative place for our community.**

**4. To be a wildlife sanctuary**

*Last two close and almost equal low priorities*

*"Fordhall is showing what miracles can happen ... when the best ideas and the best people get together... I like the democratic nature of the place and that everyone is made welcome."*

*"I would then love to see the model duplicated across the country." Members quotes.*

The FCLI Board have used this data, together with all of your comments to draft the impact areas and pledges on the ballot form.

This, we hope, will set a direction of travel for decades ahead. Ensuring what we do now supports that journey in every possible way.

## What we should focus on for the next 1-2 years?

You said (ranked in order of preference):

**1. Good food and nutrition**

**2. Climate crisis and ecological emergency**

**3. Onsite biodiversity**

*Top three very closely rated, with 1 and 2 neck and neck. There was quite a jump between the priority of these and those below.*

**4. Renewable energy**

**5. Education delivery to schools**

**6. Health and well-being in nature**

**7. Don't do anything else new**

## If the opportunity arose locally, should the Fordhall Community Land Initiative look at acquiring more land in the future?

60% Yes

0.5% No

23% Maybe

16.5% I don't know enough to comment



Volunteers tree planting as part of our Silvopasture project

# Minutes AGM

## 23rd April 2022

**Present:** A full list of all members present is available on request.

**Apologies:** A full list of all apologies is available on request.

### Agenda

Christine Tate took the Chair and welcomed all those present to the meeting.

### Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 23rd April at Fordhall Organic Farm

The Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Society held on 23rd April were circulated prior to the meeting. There were no matters arising.

Michael Revell proposed the acceptance of last year's AGM minutes (2022) as being a correct and true account. Rev. Lesley McNeil seconded. All voted in favour. None against, no abstentions.

*It was unanimously RESOLVED that the minutes be and are approved and the Chairman be and is authorised to sign the same as a true record.*

### Election of Board Members

Article 34 of the rules of the FCLI state that one third of the 13 Board members (being those longest in office) are required to retire by rotation each year and, if wished, may offer themselves for re-election.

Five members stood down from Board: Sarah Knowles, Kathryn Rhodes, David Holton, Christine Tate and The Revd Lesley McNeil. All were thanked for their hard work and dedication to FCLI.

Christine Tate (Chair) and The Revd Lesley McNeil both put themselves forward for re-election through the ballot. There were two new candidates for election: Bill McAllister-Lovatt and Will Dennis.

200 votes cast. 199 in favour of all five candidates, 0 against and 1 abstention.

*It was resolved that Christine Tate and Lesley McNeil be re-elected to the Board and that Bill McAllister-Lovatt and Will Dennis are elected to the Board of Directors.*

### Treasurer's Report by Paul Austin

A full copy of the Treasurer's Report circulated with the Annual Review.

2022 has been a positive story. Charlotte and the team have worked hard during another challenging year, albeit not as tough as the past couple of years. FCLI

achieved a trading surplus of £35,809 against a budget of £14,344. For those of you that study the accounts you will have noticed an overall accounting deficit showing. To be clear, this was intended, and is different from the operating surplus mentioned in the budget as it takes into account planned investments made from reserves during the year.

The operating surplus was achieved from our trading activities seeing steady trade (Arthur's Farm Kitchen, Straw Lodge and yurts). We also saw shares income grown by £23k, which, after refunding shares upon death to estates, left a positive share income of £17,500.

The Grazer newsletter had a long-awaited price increase from £17.50 per year to £28.00 per year. This was in light of increasing production costs over the past five years, and that we also have to keep its margins at a specific level to be eligible for the 25% Gift Aid on subscription fees. I would like to thank our loyal subscribers as this is a valuable source of income.

Looking forward, the 2023 operational budget indicates a trading deficit of just over £1,267, with further planned investment during the year into our climate work and continued restoration of the Fordhall farmhouse. We have historically always beaten our operational budget, so we are confident we can continue this trend. I would also like to thank all those who have generously extended their interest-free loans with FCLI.

The Board has also approved a mortgage repayment equivalent to 50% of the debt for the 2023 financial year, which will help reduce increasing repayment costs.

Q: Anon online – Is the drop in operating income from events and courses from 2021 to 2022 due to the end of Covid-related activities? How will you compensate for this in 2023?

A: Paul Austin – There was a drop in attendance post-Covid as people explored further afield. We also reduced the large-scale joint events we ran with the tenant farmer Ben due to staff returning to their regular posts. We are seeing healthy bookings for private events such as weddings, which will help to replace the income; these were streams we could not use in Covid.

Q: Anon online – What is the current situation with our mortgage interest rate? How long until end of term?

A: Paul Austin – We have paid off 50% of capital in 2023 with £22k capital remaining. There are eight years left on the term at 1.5% over base rate.



Q: David Raywood – Where are reserves held and are we able to maximise the interest rate applicable to our reserves with increasing interest rates?

A: Paul Austin – We hold reserves in multiple banks and spread to keep them protected (max £85k). We aim to use ethical banks, where possible, and will look to maximise opportunities where we can.

Q: Bob Griffiths – Noted that Arthur's Farm Kitchen has done tremendously well. Big jump on previous year. Maintenance costs have had a big jump too. Why was this? Also why are debtors so high?

A: Charlotte Hollins – Car park improvements were allocated to maintenance costs along with a covered shelter added to the yurt decking. Debtors include money owing from Fordhall Farm Ltd for school visit delivery.

Q: Graham Sedgley – What was unrecoverable VAT?

A: Charlotte Hollins – VAT is complex for FCLI as we are partially exempt. Each year the VAT we can reclaim depends on the split of FCLI's income between business activity and charitable activity.

Q: Michael Revell – How long have we been with our current Auditors?

A: Charlotte Hollins – Since the beginning. We tender and get quotes every three years and Howson's have been most cost effective each time.

### **Resolution: To Adopt the Annual Accounts for the Year Ending 31st December 2022**

Bob Griffiths proposed, and Chris Lunt seconded. Votes were received in advance.

196 votes for, 0 against and 3 abstentions.

*It was therefore RESOLVED that the accounts for the year ending 31st December 2022 be adopted by the members of Fordhall Community Land Initiative.*

### **Resolution: To Adopt Howsons Accountants as Auditors for FCLI for 31st December 2023 year**

Jack Tavernor proposed, and Graham Sedgley seconded. Votes were received in advance:

196 votes for, 1 against and 2 abstentions

*It was therefore RESOLVED that Howsons Accountants be adopted as the auditors for the financial year ending 31st December 2023, and that the Board members be and are authorised to fix their remuneration.*

### **Chairman's Report by Christine Tate**

A full copy of the Chairman's report was circulated with the Annual Review.

Christine noted that 2022 will be remembered as another year of rapid change and history-making

events and the teams have navigated through these changes well. FCLI's priority for 2022 was to test new and existing activities and evaluate our impact, and to define our role in tackling the climate and ecological crisis.

We believe that we all need to be part of the solution as we drive towards the nation's net zero targets. Therefore, the FCLI created a climate change statement and policy, and allocated £40,000 to climate work in 2022 to be spent in accordance with consultations with members. This included investment in renewable energy together with increasing biodiversity onsite.

Christine highlighted that the health and safety of all visitors, staff and volunteers is of upmost importance. The FCLI's external audit noted: "*The H&S culture at Fordhall Farm feels excellent and I found very little to even consider suitable for improvement. Overall I came away believing the operations on site are being carried out safely and with real consideration for those involved*".

Christine advised that, as income has grown sufficiently, FCLI has been able to bring pay to market averages for the first time ever. Thanks were made to our many wonderful volunteers, staff, Board members and all shareholders, supporters and funders. Moving forward in an ever-changing world it's right that the Board takes stock, reflects and develops FCLI's strategic vision and direction for the years ahead. This will be our focus for 2023.

Charlotte Hollins followed with a short presentation sharing some of the consultancy and mentoring support that has been offered to community groups across the country who want to learn from Fordhall's journey.

Q: Bill McAllister – What model do you use to measure/monitor wellbeing, as I have access to a good one?

A: Christine Tate – We use our own surveys, case studies and quotes to monitor impact. However, we are very interested in finding out more about any you can share with us.

### **AOB**

Howard Betts gave a two-minute presentation on the potential to install wind turbines at Fordhall. Further information will be sent to the FCLI Board to review.

**There being no other business or questions raised, the meeting was formally closed.**

The afternoon session included a talk from the tenant farmer and member consultation on FCLI's future strategy.



***“The environment is where we all meet;  
where all have a mutual interest;  
it is the one thing all of us share.” - Lady Bird Johnson***

### **Ever Thought About Leaving a Legacy?**

Leaving a special gift in your will allows us to ensure the precious landscape at Fordhall continues to be nurtured for people and planet. No matter how big or small the bequest or donation, they are all incredibly valuable and help us to realise our vision to ensure soil, farm and community continue to thrive together.

For more information and our full legacy booklet, please visit **[fordhallfarm.com/leavealegacy](http://fordhallfarm.com/leavealegacy)** or call **01630 638 696**

*Please come & see us - we are open all year & free to visit!*

The Fordhall Community Land Initiative  
Fordhall Organic Farm,  
Tern Hill Road, Market Drayton  
Shropshire  
TF9 3PS

We are on the outskirts of Market Drayton on the A53,  
next door to Müller Dairy.

Tel: 01630 638696

Email: [project@fordhallfarm.com](mailto:project@fordhallfarm.com)

### **Opening Times for Trails and Farm Shop:**

Tuesday to Saturday 9.30am - 5pm (cafe open 10-4)

Sunday & Bank Holidays 10am - 4pm

*Closed Christmas Day to New Year's Day*



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