

## Greenacres Smallholding CIC

Presentation to Witnesham and Swilland Parish Council

20<sup>th</sup> April 2022

### ***Our Vision***

- 1. To create a safe, sustainable, biodiverse space for all people, animals, and nature to learn, grow and thrive**
- 2. To provide an alternative, sustainable way for people to source their food direct from the farm in a way that is fair for consumers and farmers alike**
- 3. To address food poverty by giving people the tools to become self-sufficient.**
- 4. To maintain and sustain the Suffolk Heritage Breeds for future generations**

### **What have we achieved so far?**

Over the past 4 years, in our spare time, we have been gradually clearing the rubbish from the site, re-instating and managing the boundary hedgerows, building corridors for nature and wildlife.

Since 2017, we have successfully managed, bred, and produced a small herd of free-range, mixed, native breed pigs, successfully selling the produce on Farmers Markets throughout Suffolk, and building a small but loyal following amongst our customers.

Through the sale of our produce, we have re-invested in more livestock, namely Ixworth chickens and Silver Appleyard ducks. And last year with the help of our members and directors we were able to purchase 3 Suffolk

ewes. Following receipt of a donation, we will be accepting our Red Poll cattle in September.

We are listed as a private nature reserve (PNR) with the Suffolk Wildlife Trust, and have been actively encouraging a wildflower meadow, by grazing the livestock over winter.

We were successful last year in a bid for 420 saplings to celebrate the Queens Green Canopy. We also received a donation of trees from Mr. Templeman. We have planted several trees already, and are working with orchard consultant, Mr. Dan Neuteboom, a veteran with 60 years' experience, to plant a heritage orchard this year, as well as a wind break to shelter the orchard.

In 2021 we set up a Community Interest Company, a special type of company that is not-for-profit and benefits the community that it serves, rather than directors and shareholders.

We have a board of voluntary directors and trustees who have a wealth of knowledge between them, and they have been working closely with myself and Andy to ensure that we are keeping on track with the work that needs to be undertaken.

We are reducing our reliance on using heavy machinery to carry out daily tasks, such as feeding livestock. We plan to bring in our harvest by hand and horse, allowing less of a compaction impact on the soil, letting it absorb more carbon and retain it better.

We have helped two young people through volunteering opportunities since September last year, through Lapwing Education in Woodbridge, and we are working with the Country Trust Education Charity on developing farm visits for children in the most deprived areas of Ipswich.

### **So, how is this an asset for Witnesham?**

Andrew's family farm was part of Witnesham village from the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Bought by his great-grandfather in 1906, the family farmed for 4 generations before the sale in 2009. Many local people will have bought

directly from Nelson Farm throughout the generations and will have memories of Andrew's family and the farm.

By re-creating the farmyard as it was in the 1887 land survey, we will be able to offer a living history of Winesham village life as it would have been in the 1930's. Bringing revenue, volunteering, training, and job opportunities, as well as raising the profile of the villages.

This will develop to be an educational and therapeutic immersive experience for all people of all ages to learn, grow and thrive.

We believe that our smallholding can help to sustain the villages, by providing fresh, locally grown, seasonal vegetables, fruit, meat, eggs, and dairy, direct from the farm at realistic prices, and feed those who are struggling to make ends meet.

We recognize that we still have a long way to go to achieve all our dreams and ambitions for our little corner of the Suffolk Countryside

And we can't do all this on our own so we are asking for Community Investment from householders in the villages.

By investing in the farm, either financially, or physically, together, we can create

**"A farm owned by the village, for the benefit of the village."**

We are asking for investment of £60 a year, (that's just £5 a month) per household. Your investment will go towards:

Maintaining and sustaining the Suffolk heritage livestock breeds

You will be supporting a local, sustainable, nature-friendly method of farming,

You will have an opportunity to buy a share of the produce,

You will receive discounts on farm events and workshops,

You will have voting rights at the AGM,

You will be able to volunteer to receive a share of the harvest,

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