

## **TROTTISCLIFFE COMMUNITY FARM REPORT**

**31<sup>st</sup> August 2023 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024**

On 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023 the trustees took over the running of the farm. Those Trustees were Alison Prountzos, Lucy Henderson, Debbie Owen and Sandy Stevens. It was decided to rename it Trottiscliffe Community Farm as it was agreed that Trottiscliffe School had very little involvement. Fortunately, Deb Lawton agreed to join us as Treasurer, along with Jo Donaldson as Secretary and very recently Patrick Carty as head of maintenance. Sandy Stevens resigned due to personal reasons.

### **Animal Welfare**

On 4<sup>th</sup> September 2023, 16 Boray Sheep were rehomed to a local sheep farmer Chris Woodhead, because, as he noted, they were in poor condition and needed worming, vaccinating and castrating, all of which we were unable to deal with. Also rehomed were the chickens, due being badly pecked and sharing an enclosure with several rats nests.

On 5<sup>th</sup> October TCF were audited by the FSA (Food Standards Authority). After completing a thorough inspection, the Officer left us with 4 pages of policies and procedures concerning feed storage issues, rat infestation, lack of records, tagging, registration etc., and gave us 1 month to start improvements.

Jo Donaldson took control of the paperwork (along with her husband James behind the scenes) and worked tirelessly to implement all the Officers requirements. However, it was decided that the ducks had to be rehomed as there were also rats nests under their enclosures, along with the quails.

On 20<sup>th</sup> March 2024 a follow-up audit from the FSA was conducted. The follow-up report commented on excellent feed storage arrangements, good record keeping and correct use of veterinary medical records. After spending 2 hours going through the files and inspecting the animals, the FSA signed us off with a clean bill of health with no further follow-up required.

The Parish Council are aware that the County Parish Holding of the plot of land occupied by TCF needs to be changed from the past owner (2018 to 31Aug 23) to the current owners of the newly established TCF on 31 8 23.

### **Finance**

Since 31<sup>st</sup> August we have had an income of £12,422 from fundraisers, donations and sponsorship.

## **Completed Improvements**

1. Due to a complaint from a neighbour concerning the goats jumping into their garden and eating it we decided to make a new secure enclosure with goat house our priority.
2. A generous anonymous donor made a significant contribution towards a brand-new donkey stable, which was purchased and installed on 18<sup>th</sup> December 2023. They are now happily grazing in the top paddock, although this will soon be restricted going into Spring due to the risk of laminitis.
3. And also, thanks to a very generous Village Hall committee, the 3 little pigs are now very happy in their much larger enclosure which now adheres to the recommended square meterage ratio to piggy. The VH also make a monthly contribution of £70 towards their maintenance costs.

Our next project will be the Alpacas as they need a pen and shelter. We had a visit from a professional Alpaca keeper who has given us loads of advice on keeping them and is always on hand with our queries. He has offered to visit and give a talk and demonstration on how to handle and care for them. It should also be noted that Juno at Coldrum Stones is expecting a Cria in the next few weeks and it is our intention to sell it and rehome the remaining 2.

**Charitable Status** – we have applied and are awaiting their decision. It's been a mammoth task, diligently undertaken by Jo.

We have also been in discussions with the charity Friends of Shelby Newsted who are keen to supply us with an American style barn for the children to use as a shelter/classroom, subject to planning approval.

**Grange Park** – It should be noted that GP are invaluable to the farm as they are responsible for the majority of the maintenance of the grounds. Currently they visit twice a week with their year 9 & 10's. However, they are very keen to form a closer alliance and it is their intention to start bringing their SEN adults aged 21-25 for work experience. GP have allocated £1000 for the purchase of farm tools.

**Going Forward** – Once the ground works are completed and the area around the pens recovered, we will bring back a few hens. Sadly we have decided that with the constant threat of Avian Flu we cannot manage ducks and so no duck pond.