

Hampshire County Farms Annual Report 2021/22

Select Committee Briefing - 12th July 2022



**Hampshire
County Farms**

Supporting the future of farming



Hampshire
County Council

www.hants.gov.uk/countyfarms

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 - Hampshire County Farms
 - County Farms Policy
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- Our new tenants
- Looking forward to 2022/23

County Farms



Overview

- Established in the early 20th century as the **County Smallholdings Service** to support **entry into farming**, produce more food and provide rural employment
- Hampshire is **one of 43** smallholdings authorities in England & Wales
- Provides farm tenancies to enable **new entrants** to establish their own farming businesses and existing tenants to take the next step



Legislative Context

Agriculture Act 1970

- County Farms estate is a **smallholding authority** under the Act
- Provides discretionary power to provide opportunities for appropriately qualified persons to **farm on their own account**
- Allows the council to **let the land**

Local Government Act 1972

- Provides the power to **sell, exchange or appropriate land**

Agriculture Act 2020

- Sets out provisions for '**public money for public goods**' with an increased focus on environmental outcomes
- New **Environmental Land Management** scheme (ELMs) will replace the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS)
- Empowers Defra to provide **funding** through the **New Entrants Support Scheme**

National context

Council farms provide:

- 12% of land let on new farm business tenancies (5 year average)
- circa 58% of all lettings for fully equipped holdings
- smaller than average holding size - requiring less start up capital
- longer than average tenancy lengths
- a high proportion of new entrants to farming



The County Farms Estate

- **1,914 hectares** of land; **35 equipped holdings** in **28 locations**
- **Dairy, arable, horticulture** and **livestock** farm businesses together with some horse-based enterprises
- **Farms vary** in size, location, condition, rental value and performance

Farm type	No. equipped holdings	Area (ha)
Dairy	8	571.22
Livestock	13	503.83
Arable & Horticulture	8	466.68
Livery/horses	4	30.56
<i>Vacant for development purposes</i>	2	194.73
Bare land	-	109.62
Other (e.g. Woodland, ponds, tracks)	-	37.36
Total	35	1,914.00



Farm Locations

WINCHESTER AND EASTLEIGH DISTRICTS:

Map ref	Estate	Farm	Sector
19	Kings Worthy	South Stoke Farm	Dairy
		Down Farm	Dairy
		Meadow Farm	Dairy
		Bank Farm	Livestock
		Copse Farm	Livestock
18	Compton	Itchen Farm	Livestock
		Bushfield Farm	Livestock
		Cox Croft Farm	Livestock
		Yew Tree Farm	Arable
		Attwoods Drove Farm	Dairy
2, 14	Swanmore/ Soberton		Grazing/ Arable
17	Fair Oak	Holding No 1	Arable
		Holding No 6	Horse Grazing
12 13	Botley	Uplands Farm	Dairy
		Newhouse Farm	Livestock
		Lower Wangfield Farm	Livestock
		Holding No 3 Broad Oak	Horse

NEW FOREST AND TEST VALLEY DISTRICTS:

Map ref	Estate	Farm	Sector
1	Ringwood	Sabines Farm	Horse
3	Fordingbridge	Brooklands Farm	Livestock
4	Lockerley	Holding No 4, Annarts Farm	Livestock
5	Chilworth	Kennels Farm	Livestock



HANT AND BASINGSTOKE DISTRICTS:

Map ref	Estate	Farm	Sector
21	Mattingley	Creek Farm	Dairy
		Hazeley Farm	Dairy
		Little Church Farm	Livestock
22	Rotherwick	Lyde Green Farm	Dairy
23, 24	Chineham	Land East of Basingstoke Swing Swang Lane	Arable
25	Sherborne St John	West Lane Farm	Livestock
		Greatfield Farm	Livestock
26	Basing	Upper Cufaude Farm	Livestock
27 28	Pamber	Ravenscot Farm	Dairy
		Unequipped	Grazing

EAST HAMPSHIRE DISTRICT:

Map ref	Estate	Farm	Sector
20	Bordon	Stanford Grange Farm	Livestock
15	Clanfield / Horndean		Arable/ Grazing
16	Down / Petersfield		Arable/ Grazing

FAREHAM DISTRICT:

Map ref	Estate	Farm	Sector
7	Chilling	Little Abshot Farm	Horticulture
		Chilling Farm	Arable
6	Brownwich	Lower Brownwich	Grazing
		Upper Brownwich	Horticulture
			Arable
10	Titchfield	Tynefield	Livestock
		Hillsbrow	Livestock
		Hollam Hill	Livestock
11	Fareham Portchester	Condor Farm	Arable

County Farms Policy 2021 Towards 2050

**A Vision for a Better
Farming Future**



New Policy



Policy Priorities:

Tenancy - *“Our aim is to provide inclusive opportunities for new entrants into a sustainable and innovative farming environment and opportunities for existing tenants to progress to larger holdings.”*

Land management and farming systems - *“Our aim is to achieve sustainable and adaptive systems of farming and land management to support high quality environmental, social and economic outcomes for Hampshire.”*

Financial management - *“Our aim is to support tenants to establish and grow viable agricultural businesses by providing farms from which they can operate and thrive for the duration of their tenancy.”*

The Farm Estate - *“Our aim is to maintain the scale and quality of the land and assets available to the County Farms Service.”*

2021/22: Year 1 incorporating new policy into practice



Promoting Hampshire County Farms

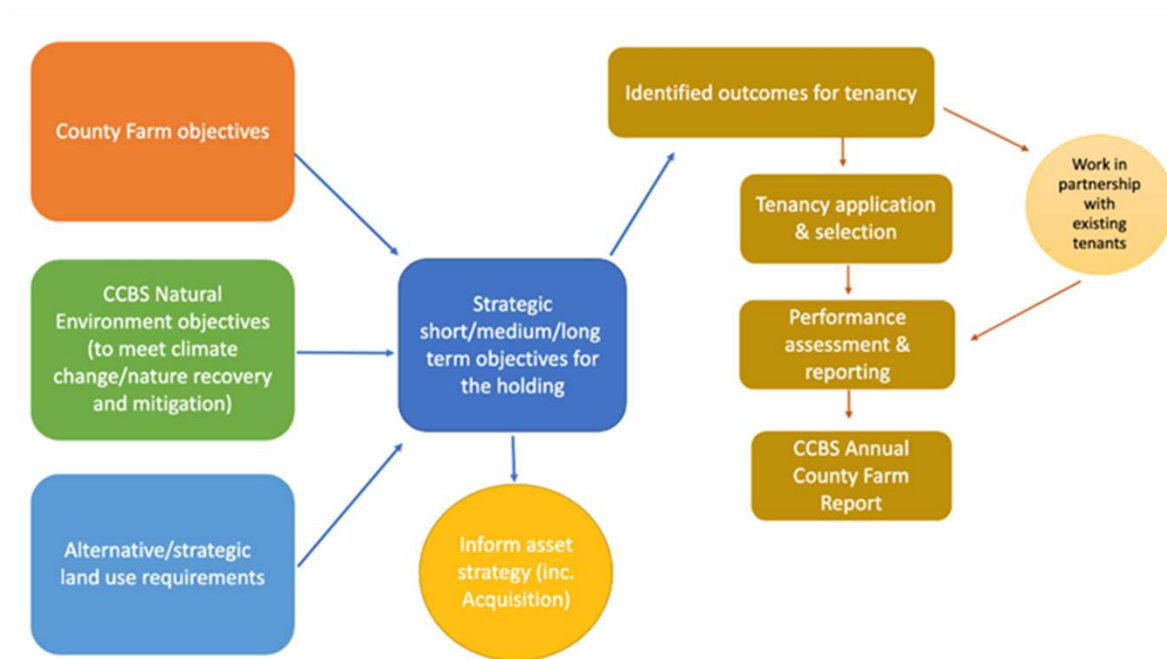
- Team and Service now within Natural Environment & Recreation branch of CCBS
- Budget changes to ring-fence financial management
- Communications plan & social media engagement
- Work to deliver new webpages, to be launched August 2022
- New logo and associated branding



**Hampshire
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Supporting the future of farming

Identifying tenancy outcomes



- Farm Landscape & Environmental Assessments ('FLEAs')
- Working in partnership with tenants
- Information for existing tenants, e.g. signposting & guidance to new schemes
- New Lettings process

New lettings & selection process

- The major element of work last year – 7 farms marketed compared with the average of 1 per annum
 - ✓ Compilation of farm particulars
 - ✓ Advertising
 - ✓ Expressions of Interest
 - ✓ Viewing Days
 - ✓ Outline Application
 - ✓ Full Application
 - ✓ Vetting and shortlisting
 - ✓ Interviews & decision-making
 - ✓ Requirement for Farm Action Plan
- Scoring was carefully considered and weighted, as follows:
 - a. Agricultural experience & qualifications – 25%
 - b. Financial strength & acumen – 25%
 - c. Climate & environmental commitment & awareness – 25%
 - d. Entrepreneurship & business acumen – 15%
 - e. Rent tendered – 10%



Priority Outcomes

Our new tenants have signed up to deliver the following priority outcomes during the tenancy:

1. To keep sustainable food production at the core of farm activities;
2. To protect, put into and keep in good condition the farm's soil health and structure, including organic matter content;
3. To protect the farm's natural resources, including the local water environment which is vulnerable to nitrate and pesticide leaching;
4. To improve on-farm biodiversity & connectivity between neighbouring farms, local sites of importance for nature conservation and within the wider landscape through good management and provision of joined up wildlife-rich habitats;

Priority Outcomes

5. To strive towards net zero greenhouse gas emissions with a well-considered plan for monitoring, mitigation and adaptation;
6. To boost pollinators and promote farmland bird abundance on farm through good engagement, monitoring and land management practices;
7. To farm sustainably, adopting better performance measures, and with a willingness to undergo independent accreditation and/or periodic auditing to evidence strong performance;
8. To adopt and uphold exemplar animal welfare standards;
9. To engage with the public and play an active part in increasing the understanding of farming and rural Hampshire in the local community.

Applicant numbers through the letting stages

Farm	EOI forms	Viewings	Outline applications	Shortlisted to full stage	Full applications	Shortlisted to interview
Lyde Green	18	15	5	3	3	2
Hazeley	15	17	9	8	7	6
Little Church	19	23	13	11	11	6
Lower Wangfield	17	18	10	5	3	3
Newhouse	12	8	4	4	4	2
Upper Brownwich	15	11	8	8	6	5
Bushfield	27	22	11	8	7	3

Tenant performance & reporting

- Tenancy performance expectations have been developed to inform extension requests
- Annual inspections – compliance, condition
- New tenants six monthly inspections
- Facilitation of training, mentoring, support



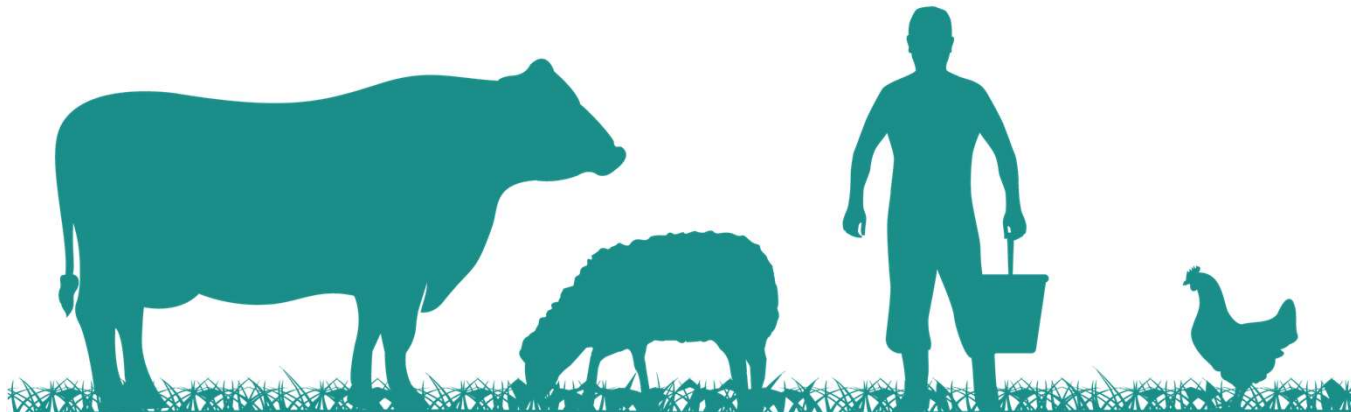
Tenancy breakdown

Tenancy types:

Tenancy type	2011-2012	Policy Review	2021/22
Lifetime (secure)	10	7	6
Retirement (secure)	14	3	2
FBT Less than 5 years	15	11	9
FBT 5 - 10 years	14	9	12
FBT 10-15 years	3	8	8
FBT More than 15 years	4	3	2

Tenant movements:

Action	No.
Tenants leaving to farm elsewhere	3
Internal promotions within estate	2
Retirements	2
Industry leavers	1
Tenancy extensions	2
New entrants to estate	5



Financial performance

Income

- Rental from farm tenancies, bare land lettings and grazing arrangements

Costs

- Operational service costs are met through income
- Repair and maintenance responsibilities shared between landlord and tenant

Net revenue position

- £181k, or £84k after PS-administered risk management related costs

2021/22 Financial Summary £'000	Annual budget	Year End Actual	Year End Variance
Expenditure	351	657	306
Income	(681)	(838)	(157)
Net budget/ actuals	(330)	(181)	149

Looking forward to 2022/23

- Ten county farms have now joined farmer cluster groups. These will enable the farms to deliver joined up and enhanced biodiversity for the benefit of the wider landscape.
- Newhouse and South Stoke Farms both hosted LEAF Open Farm Sunday events. Several also hope to work with The Country Trust this year to host school visits.
- We have formed a partnership with CPRE Hampshire for the second phase of their Hedgerow Heroes project.
- New lettings round for Spring 2023 – up to 5 farms

Our New Tenants



Upper Brownwich Farm

Richard Stiles is focussed on outcomes which meet Hampshire County Farms' priorities. These include bringing in livestock at what has been an arable farm to increase organic matter and soil health. He's also introducing environmental stewardship schemes and farming methods which support biodiversity and wildlife habitats such as the installation of barn owl boxes.





Newhouse Farm

Lester Brooks and his family have been busy starting up their micro dairy since taking over the tenancy at Newhouse Farm, welcoming the arrival of their first calf. Community is at the heart of their future plans with well-considered educational visits and a brand new farm shop: They'll be making their own ice cream too. The couple are striving to get the farm onto an environmental stewardship scheme, farming in a sustainable way.

Lower Wangfield Farm

Liam Harvey has always been interested in agriculture and giving back to the community, and this is central to his plans for his new tenancy at Lower Wangfield Farm. He sees the farm business expanding to include sheep, cattle as well as hay and straw with a longer-term vision of farm visits for the local community and schools and a farm shop.





Little Church Farm

Jake Smith intends to grow his flock of sheep and rear more animals during his tenancy at Little Church Farm. He's in the midst of applying for sustainable farming and stewardship schemes, and plans to introduce herbals leys which will increase the numbers of insects and pollinators as well as low input grassland to protect the River Whitewater that runs through the farm.

Lyde Green Farm

Adam Johnstone and family are fulfilling a lifelong dream in their new tenancy at Lyde Green Farm. Their efforts in sustainable food production, exemplar standards and high animal welfare have already led to an impressive seal of approval by Arla Foods, who have recently awarded them a milk contract. The team have now set their sights on achieving the exemplar Arla 360 accreditation and driving forward their dairy enterprise, while immersing themselves within the local community.



Bushfield Farm

– progression tenancy

Two existing County Farm tenants, Andy Kirby and Tom Comley, are collaborating on a new forward-thinking venture by taking on Bushfield Farm as a shared opportunity. They plan to add value to their existing farm businesses while embracing County Farms' priorities by developing their regenerative farming practices.

Andy and Tom's working relationship grew out of a mentoring relationship set up informally between the neighbours when Tom took on his starter farm a few years ago.



Thank you



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