



growing together



Chair

**Candidate Information
Pack**

Nov 2025



Eastside People

Welcome from our Chair

Thank you for your interest in joining the Board of Millennium Farm Trust, the charity that runs Depden Care Farm.

For more than ten years, our care farm in rural Suffolk has been a place where people with a variety of additional needs can learn, grow and flourish. Through animal care, horticulture, and meaningful work outdoors, we help individuals build confidence, develop skills and connect with others. Every day, we see the difference this approach makes to people's lives – improving wellbeing, independence and a sense of belonging.

We are now seeking new Trustees to help guide our next stage of development. As a member of our Board, you will play a vital role in shaping the future of the charity: supporting our dedicated staff, ensuring strong governance, and helping us reach more people who can benefit from what we do. We are particularly keen to strengthen the Board with experience at the strategic level in areas such as finance, marketing, and business development – but above all, we are looking for people who share our values and want to make a tangible difference in their community.

This recruitment pack will give you more information about who we are, what we do, and what being a Trustee involves. If you are inspired by our work and can offer your time, ideas and enthusiasm, we would be delighted to hear from you.

Thank you for considering joining us on this journey. Together, we can continue to ensure that Depden Care Farm remains a place where everyone has the opportunity to flourish.

With best wishes,

Jerry Massey

Chair of Trustees,

Millennium Farm Trust

About us

Who we are

Millennium Farm Trust is the charity behind Depden Care Farm. It is a well-established, mission-led charity providing learning, training, and wellbeing opportunities through farming. For over twenty five years, we've supported people of all abilities to grow in confidence, skills, and connection — using the care farm environment to nurture both people and land.

We're proud of our reputation as a well-governed, forward-thinking organisation. In 2023, Millennium Farm Trust won a Charity Governance Award in recognition of our strong leadership, accountability, and strategic clarity — reflecting our commitment to doing things properly and sustainably. Our trustees, staff, and volunteers share a deep sense of purpose and a belief in the transformative power of farming to change lives.

Looking ahead, we're ambitious for the future. We're strengthening our impact measurement, expanding our partnerships, and exploring new ways to demonstrate the value of care farming in education, health, and social inclusion. For our new Chair, this means joining a confident, values-driven organisation with the stability, vision, and teamwork to make a lasting difference.



What we do

Based at Depden Care Farm in rural Suffolk, our programmes combine purposeful agricultural and horticultural work with personalised support. We help individuals develop practical and social skills, build resilience, and find pride in meaningful achievement. The result is a thriving, inclusive community where everyone can contribute and belong.

Our impact

Supporting Ambition and Progression

We value and celebrate everyone's contribution however small and support our Farm Helpers to develop new skills and achievements. Our in-house learning programmes are based on real work on the farm and tailor-made for the individuals concerned. We use the nationally recognised framework, Recognising and Rewarding Progress and Achievement (RARPA) to ensure quality and evidence progression and we are accredited for the AQA Unit Awards Scheme.

“ I love all the work that we do here. If you want to work in animal care, or learn about making woodwork stuff or how to use petrol mowers, then look no further than Depden Care Farm.

Its super supportive. It's made a big difference to my life.”

- Depden Farm Helper



Our vision, mission & values

Vision

Everyone, whatever their ability, has access to meaningful work that builds self-esteem, self-confidence and self-care and has a place where their contribution to their community is valued and respected.

Mission

Millennium Farm Trust enhances the quality-of-life of adults with additional needs through the therapeutic use of animal husbandry, agriculture and horticulture work.

Delivering our mission

We will do this by....

Creating a centre of excellence. Maximising the assets and resources we have available.

Growing our core business. Increasing attendances to 3,750 per year.

Using the farm in the evenings and weekends for activities related to health, wellbeing and local community engagement.

Ensuring Farm Helpers achieve the best they can by encouraging and recognising achievement.

Invest in our staff to underpin our growth ambitions and meet the changing needs and requirements of our customers.

Be open to additional opportunities to expand and deliver of our services elsewhere.





growing together

Our core values

that by Growing together we will foster a community at Millennium Farm Trust that promotes transformation, accountability, and integrity. A community which is built on:

Respect



Being allowed to be true to yourself. Respected and valued for who you are and what you offer.

Wellbeing



A safe place to build personal resilience and improve your physical and mental health.

Teamwork



Connecting people and communities through fulfilling work on the farm.

Learning



Empowering everyone to progress their skills and reach their life goals.

Compassion



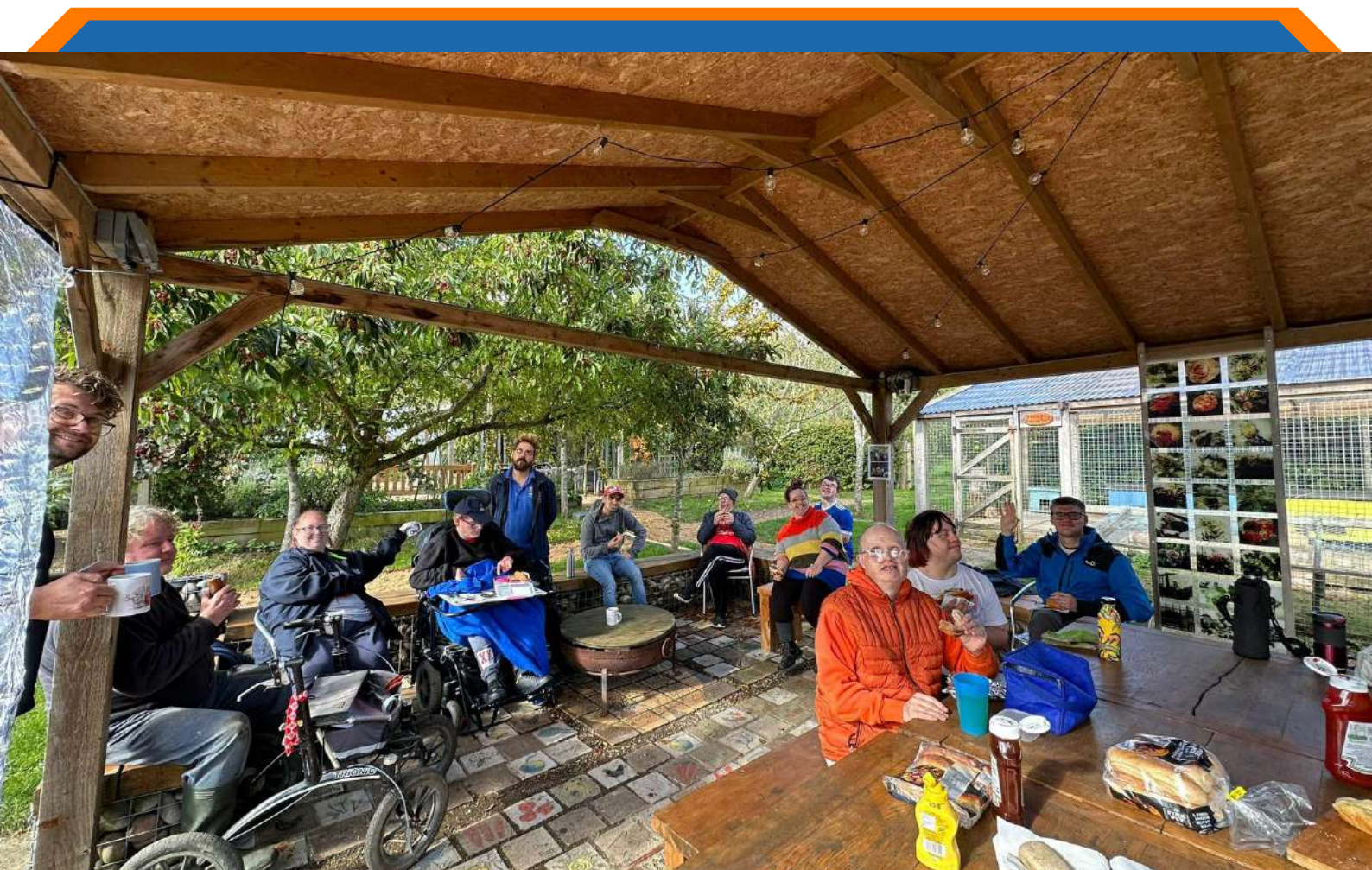
Professional care and loving-kindness supporting everyone to reach their full potential.

Strategic priorities

As we come to the end of our current strategic plan, MFT are looking at the strategic direction of Depden Care Farm for the next 5-10 years. The Board are seeking to develop a strategic plan to serve as roadmap beyond the immediate operational plans and act as a guiding light for future activities and developments. The immediate focus will be to ensure that we complete all of the initiatives and development that we have started and to ensure that we maximise the utilisation of our assets within our existing framework of provision. Alongside this activity we will review how we can do more for our existing farm helpers, ensuring that we are stretching them enough and measuring their achievement appropriately with an eye to helping those who can transition into work.

Our longer-term objective is to use our learning and experience to expand the opportunities available to those who would benefit from spending time at a care farm. We recognise too that we need to develop a more comprehensive process for ensuring we have the right people and staffing structure in place to enable our farm workers get the best possible experience and MFT makes the most of the assets that it is entrusted with.

Our current five-year strategic plan can be viewed [here](#).



Our commitment to diversity

Millennium Farm Trust is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of everyone in our care. We have robust policies, clear procedures, and a culture of vigilance that ensures the safety and wellbeing of all participants, staff, and volunteers.

Everyone in our organisation shares responsibility for maintaining the highest standards of care, professionalism, and accountability. We are equally committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion. We welcome and celebrate difference, recognising that varied perspectives and experiences strengthen our community and enrich the lives of those we support.

We strive to create an environment where everyone feels respected, valued, and able to contribute fully — a place where people can truly belong.



An exciting time to join us

Millennium Farm Trust stands at a pivotal moment in its journey. For over a decade, we have been recognised as a mission-led charity at the forefront of care farming, supporting adults of all abilities to grow in confidence, skills, and connection through meaningful agricultural and horticultural work. Our vibrant, inclusive community at Depden Care Farm in rural Suffolk has become a place where everyone can contribute, belong, and flourish, guided by our core values of respect, wellbeing, teamwork, learning, and compassion. Our commitment to strong governance and strategic clarity was recently honoured with a Charity Governance Award, underscoring our reputation as a forward-thinking, well-run organisation.

Looking ahead, we are embarking on a period of exciting change and ambition. As we strengthen our impact measurement, expand partnerships, and explore innovative ways to demonstrate the value of care farming in education, health, and social inclusion, we are also preparing for significant transitions in our leadership team and five-year strategic plan. This is a unique opportunity to join us at a critical stage of growth—helping to shape the future direction of Millennium Farm Trust. New trustees will play an essential role in ensuring continuity, supporting our dedicated staff, and driving our mission forward, all while we continue to foster a thriving, values-driven community where every contribution matters.

We are currently recruiting a Chair of Trustees and two additional trustees to provide strategic leadership and governance as the organization transitions to a more executive-focused board. We seek individuals with strong strategic, business, or voluntary sector experience, and welcome candidates who can bring additional expertise in areas such as finance, HR, education, or social care.

It is important to us that our board grow to reflect the community we serve in rural Suffolk and Essex. We would particularly encourage applications from people from a working class background and those with direct or indirect lived experience of our work.

Being a Chair – what's involved

The Chair or Co-Chairs of Trustees lead the Board, ensuring that it governs Millenium Farm Trust effectively, in service of the charity's vision and mission. They lead inclusively, supporting the Board to work together effectively and providing constructive challenge to the Chief Executive, who is responsible for advising the Board and overseeing the day-to-day running of the organisation.

A helpful summary of trustee roles and responsibilities can be found in the Charity Commission guidance: [The Essential Trustee: what you need to know, what you need to do \(CC3\)](#).

What you'll gain from this role

Becoming a trustee is an interesting and compelling way to engage with the charity sector. It is a role that will give back as much as you put in, and often more. One of the primary takeaways from the [Charity Commission's 2025 research into trusteeship](#) is the extent to which trustees benefit from their experience. Although trusteeship is a significant voluntary undertaking, the majority would recommend it to others. Many trustees reported experiencing multiple and profound benefits, from feeling they are positively impacting the world to feeling more connected to a community or movement, highlighting the rewards of responsibility. Overall, just 1% of the trustee population surveyed would not recommend the role to others.

Even for people with previous experience of leading a Board, a Chair role can continue to provide opportunities to learn new skills. Understanding how to adapt your professional knowledge to useful and impactful ends is a good reminder of your versatility, giving you confidence in your existing abilities while challenging you to push the boundaries of your expertise.

As our Chair (thanks to Eastside People), you will have access to membership of the [Association of Chairs](#), a fantastic resource of peer support and guidance for your role. If you'd like to learn more about chairing, you can access [A Chair's Compass](#), a useful guide focusing on the challenges and opportunities of being a Chair.

Chair job description

Location	Board meetings are held at Depden, Bury St. Edmunds, with flexibility for remote attendance if needed.
Time Commitment	The overall time commitment is approx. 2-3 days a month. See additional information below.
Salary	This is a voluntary role. Reasonable expenses can be claimed.

Chair responsibilities

- Lead the board in providing strategic direction and governance for the organization.
- Chair board and relevant subcommittee meetings, ensuring effective decision-making.
- Oversee and support the transition of the board to a more strategic, executive-focused body.
- Ensure effective performance management and delivery of the organization's strategic plan.
- Act as an external ambassador and public face of the organization alongside the director.
- Work closely with the director, providing support and challenge as needed.
- Ensure compliance with regulatory and safeguarding requirements.
- Facilitate the development and review of governance structures and policies.
- Represent the organization at key events and with stakeholders as required.

Who we're looking for

- Proven experience in strategic management, ideally within the voluntary or social care sector.
- Previous experience as a trustee; prior chairing experience is desirable but not essential.
- Strong understanding of governance.
- Capacity to manage change and support the organization through a period of transition.
- Ability to inspire, engage, and draw out the skills of board members.

- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills, with the ability to act as an effective ambassador.
- Knowledge of resource allocation, financial oversight, and risk management.
- Willingness to be visible and engaged with the organization, including attending meetings at Depden.
- Commitment to diversity, inclusion, and representing the interests of beneficiaries.

Time commitment – additional information

The role is voluntary and the time commitment will vary. As a guide however, we expect you to commit to the following:

- The overall time commitment is approximately 2 to 3 days per month.
- Board meetings are held quarterly in the evening, and last two hours.
- It's important to also allow time to read board papers in advance of meetings.
- The AGM is once a year – during day time so that the farm helpers can attend.
- The Chair will be a member of the Finance Committee which meets 4-6 time a year.
- The chair is expected to be visible on the farm, attend key events, and maintain regular contact with staff and trustees, contributing to the organization's presence and leadership.
- The time commitment fluctuates, with periods of higher involvement during special projects (e.g., lease renewal, recruitment) or organizational changes.
- The Chair should be available for ad hoc conversations with the CEO as and when needed.
- Overall, the role is fairly flexible, with the Chair's engagement shaped by organizational needs and their own availability.

Ready to apply?

Eastside People is supporting Millenium Farm Trust in the recruitment of these roles. Please [click here](#) to apply by submitting your CV and a cover letter **both in Word doc format**.

Please use the cover letter (max 2 pages) as an opportunity to add to the information you have shared in your CV and ensure that you cover the following:

- Why is the work of Millennium Farm Trust important to you, and how can you contribute to the trust as our Chair?
- What governance experience would you bring?
- What relevant experience can you demonstrate of change management?

You are welcome to send your cover letter in writing, or as a video or audio clip, alongside your CV. Any video or audio submissions should be emailed to johns@eastsidepeople.org.

If you would like a call to discuss the role in more detail, please email John Sanger to arrange a convenient time at johns@eastsidepeople.org. Having a call of this kind will not influence the success or otherwise of your application.

We want you to have every opportunity to demonstrate your skills, ability and potential. If you have a disability or require reasonable adjustments during the application or interview process, please contact us so we can support you appropriately.

The closing date for applications is Monday 15th December. Shortlisting interviews will take place before Christmas and shortlisted candidates will have an interview with Millenium Farm Trust during the first two weeks of January 2026.

Millenium Farm Trust is an equal opportunities organisation. We actively welcome applications from individuals of all backgrounds, cultures, beliefs, and lived experiences. We strive to reflect the diversity of the communities we serve and are committed to equity and inclusion at every level of our governance.

Finally

We understand AI can be a helpful tool, but please use it with caution and ensure your application is personalised and accurate.

If you know anyone else who might be interested, then please pass this Information Pack on as we would be very pleased to hear from them.





Eastside People

Eastside People
Canopi
82 Tanner Street
London
SE1 3GN

0203 821 6174
eastsidepeople.org

Eastside People is the trading name for Eastside Consulting Ltd. Company number:
4958922.