DEPDEN CARE FARM

growing together



Trustee Recruitment

Candidate Information Pack

November 2026

Eastside People

Farm-based therapy, education and training



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.

It's 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.



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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.

Strengthening the board of trustees

We are seeking new Trustees who can bring strategic insight, constructive challenge and practical experience to the Board. Candidates may offer strength in one or more of the following priority areas:

Agricultural, horticultural or farming expertise

We would particularly welcome someone with experience of farming, horticulture or commercial food production who can help us think strategically about the future of our farming and growing activities. An understanding of how to develop vegetable sales, community growing initiatives or other commercially effective activity (combined with sound business judgement) would be especially valuable.

Commercial and business experience

We are also interested in candidates with strong commercial leadership experience and a clear understanding of how organisations operate sustainably. This may include confidence

in interpreting financial information, such as balance sheets and profit and loss accounts, and contributing to discussions about organisational performance, business development and long-term resilience.

Public sector experience

Experience of local government, the NHS, social care or related public services would bring valuable perspective to the Board. As many of our key operational relationships are with public-sector partners, we would benefit from a Trustee who understands how these organisations make decisions, commission services and work with voluntary-sector providers.

Across all three areas, we are looking for people who can scrutinise information, ask thoughtful questions and challenge constructively, while working collaboratively with fellow Trustees, staff and partners.



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.

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 trustee – what's involved

Every charity has a Board – a group of volunteers who ensure that the organisation is effective in carrying out the purpose for which it was set up. As a Millennium Farm Trust Trustee, your key responsibility is to act in the best interests of the Charity and do what you and your co-trustees (and no one else) decide will best enable the charity to carry out its purposes. In doing you are required to make balanced and adequately informed decisions, thinking about the long as well as the short term.

Finally, as a trustee you must avoid putting yourself in a position where your duty to the Trust conflicts with personal interests or loyalty to any other person or body. A helpful summary of trustee roles and responsibilities can be found in the Charity Commission guidance for new Trustees: 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.

Strategic experience

Strategic experience can be hard to come by. It can often take decades to find yourself in a role which requires strategic oversight. A charity Board role is a fantastic way of getting a head start on this, allowing you to develop and hone your critical thinking, problem-solving and analytical skills. The strategic experience which can be gained through a trustee role can have an immediate and powerful impact on your career, opening doors to new responsibilities and more senior job prospects.

Equally, for those who have already had some strategic responsibilities, a Board role provides an opportunity to use those skills in a significantly different context.

Continued personal development

Through a trustee role, you can gain a clearer idea of your professional strengths and weaknesses whilst simultaneously learning 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 push the boundaries of your expertise.

Teamworking

To operate effectively the Board of the Millennium Farm Trust encourages the collaboration of trustees with a broad range of skills, expertise and knowledge, providing the opportunity to learn from each other and strengthen decision-making. The aim is to ensure that collectively the Board has knowledge that spans the following core attributes:

- Strategic Management
- Financial
- Social Welfare
- Occupational Health
- Health & Safety
- Human Resources
- Education & Learning
- Legal
- Horticulture & Agriculture
- Estate Management
- Fundraising
- Voluntary Sector



Trustee 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. 1-2 days a month. See additional information below.
Salary	This is a voluntary role. Reasonable expenses can be claimed.

Trustee responsibilities

- Support the transition of the board to a more executive, strategic focus, moving away from hands-on management.
- Participate in one or more subcommittees, providing oversight and input on specific areas such as finance, HR, safeguarding, or education.
- Review and advise on organizational policies, business plans, and performance management frameworks.
- Act as an ambassador for the organization, helping to promote its work and impact within the community.
- Engage with staff and beneficiaries as appropriate, maintaining visibility and connection to the organization's activities.

Commitment and Focus:

- An understanding of why the Millennium Farm Trust was formed, what it does and how it is managed and be committed to the delivery of its objects.
- Ability to understand and accept the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of being a charity trustee and company director.
- A willingness to use their skills and experience for the benefit of the Trust and for the furtherance of its objects.
- A willingness and ability to devote the necessary time and effort to support the work of the Trust and its proper management.
- An overriding commitment to equal opportunities.

Communication and team working:

- Ability to communicate clearly and sensitively and to take an active part in discussions.

- Ability to work effectively in a group.
- Be open minded when seeking solutions.
- Ability to challenge constructively, listen and respect the views of others and ask questions appropriately.

Strategic approach and accountability:

- Ability to take a strategic view and be able to contribute to the development of the Trust and its future success.
- Ability to think creatively.
- Ability to exercise sound and independent judgement.
- Ability to manage difficult and/or challenging situations.
- Ability to act with integrity, objectivity, openness and honesty.
- Ability to maintain confidentiality on personal, sensitive and confidential matters.
- Ability to act in a manner that will not compromise the running and management of the Trust, bring it into disrepute and/or adversely affect its reputation.

Who we're looking for

- Demonstrable strategic thinking and business acumen, with experience in either Agricultural, horticultural or farming; executive leadership; or public sector leadership
- Ability to read and interpret financial information and organizational plans; however professional expertise in finance or HR is not essential.
- Understanding of, or interest in, the voluntary sector, social care, education, or related fields is an advantage.
- Commitment to diversity, inclusion, and representing the interests of the community served.
- Willingness to engage collaboratively, challenge constructively, and contribute positively to board discussions.
- Enthusiasm for the organization's mission and readiness to act as an ambassador for its work.

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 1 to 2 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 daytime so that the farm helpers can attend.
- There are four subcommittees, and trustees may join one or more depending on their interests and expertise; involvement varies.
- Trustees are encouraged to be visible and engaged with the organization, including occasional visits to the site, but most business is structured around scheduled meetings.
- Outside of meetings, trustees generally spend a couple of hours per month on board business, with occasional flurries of activity depending on specific responsibilities or events.
- Overall, the role is fairly flexible, with the trustees' engagement shaped by organizational needs and their own availability. The quality of engagement emphasized over the quantity of hours.



Ready to apply?

Eastside People is supporting Millennium 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 are you interested in a Trustee role at Millenium Farm Trust
- Having read the information pack, what relevant experience and skills do you feel you would bring to this role? This might come from paid work, study, community or voluntary work or other experience.

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 bonnisa@eastsidepeople.org

If you would like a call to discuss any of the roles in more detail, please email Bonnisa Moore to arrange a convenient time at bonnisa@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 9am on Monday 21st December. Shortlisting interviews will take place in the new year.

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.



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