
THE FARMING COMMUNITY NETWORK

(A CHARITABLE COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

Annual report and financial statements

for the year ended

31 March 2025

Company number: 04429778 (England and Wales)

Charity number: 1095919 (England and Wales) and SC053538 (Scotland)



THE FARMING COMMUNITY NETWORK

(A CHARITABLE COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

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(A CHARITABLE COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

CHARITY REFERENCES AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Charity number: 1095919 (England and Wales) and SC053538 (Scotland)

Company number: 04429778 (England and Wales)

DIRECTORS

The directors of the charitable company are its trustees for the purposes of charity law. The directors serving during the year and since the year end were as follows:

Mark Suthern (Chair)
Sally Steadman (Vice Chair)
Giles Bowring DL (Treasurer)
Barbara Bray
Amy Dixon
Peter Havers
Olivia Helmore
Sir Mark Hudson – resigned 23 October 2024
Revd Matthew Jeffrey
David Lodder DL – resigned 23 October 2024
Roger Mercer
Stuart Roberts
Bishop Mark Rylands
Robert Walrond

SECRETARY

Deborah Roe

SENIOR MANAGEMENT PERSONNEL

Jude McCann (Chief Executive Officer)

REGISTERED OFFICE AND OPERATIONAL ADDRESS

Bragborough Hall Business Centre
Welton Road
Daventry
NN11 7JG

AUDITORS

Dafferns Audit Limited

One Eastwood
Harry Weston Road
Binley Business Park
Coventry
CV3 2UB

INVESTMENT MANAGERS

Rathbones Brothers Plc
8 Finsbury Circus
London
EC2M 7AZ

Sarasin Investment Funds Limited
Juxon House
100 St Paul's Churchyard
London
EC4M 8BU

BNY Mellon Fund Managers Limited
PO Box 366
Darlington
DL1 9RF

CCLA
PO Box 12892
Dunmow
Essex
CM6 9DL

SOLICITORS

Lodders Solicitors LLP
Number Ten
Elm Court Arden Street
Stratford upon Avon
CV37 6PA

BANKERS

Royal Bank of Scotland
36 St Andrews Square
Edinburgh
EH2 2YB

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STATEMENT OF PUBLIC BENEFIT

"The Objects of the Charity are the relief of hardship and distress, amongst persons living and working in the agricultural, horticultural and related communities, by the provision of pastoral and practical support underpinned by a Christian ethos."

All services are made available to those in need from all faiths and none in a non-judgemental, non-proselytising but supportive way.

Public Benefits

1. **National Helpline:** The national confidential helpline is open from 7 am to 11 pm every day of the year, staffed by a team of volunteers. Talking with someone who understands farming but is not directly involved in the situation can be a real support in itself, but when appropriate, callers are offered a visit from an FCN volunteer by referral through the co-ordinator local to the caller
2. **Volunteers:** Around 400 volunteers who are 'in sympathy' with the Christian ethos, suitably experienced and in-touch with rural and farming issues, are recruited, DBS checked and appropriately trained to 'walk with' farmers and their families through times of stress and personal difficulty. Referrals to individual volunteers are made through the local FCN County Co-ordinator who is also responsible for the co-ordination and training of volunteers within their Group and liaison with their Regional Director and Head Office for all administrative and policy issues.
3. **Christian ethos:** The Charity has a clear Christian ethos which is inherent within its foundation, board of trustees and charitable objects, which is reflected in its published Vision and Ethos Statements, whilst sustaining the principle that all services are made available to those in need from all faiths and none in a non-judgemental, non-proselytising but supportive way.
4. **Partnerships:**
 - To ensure national coverage, and to respect the territories of other independent farming and rural support services, FCN has 'memoranda of understanding' with those organisations that facilitate cross referrals of clients, access to the FCN Helpline, sharing of expertise and experience and consortia bidding from national funding sources
5. **Uptake:**

The demand for FCN's services fluctuates with the level of causal factors within the industry, so that through a national crisis such as the foot and mouth epidemic in 2001, the scale can be almost overwhelming. However the nature of farming is such that even when the industry is operating under 'normal' conditions, individual businesses and families will experience periods of significant stress because of circumstances specific to the family or business so that a steady demand on FCN volunteers to manage between 1,500 and 2,500 cases per year is typical.

Further statistical details of uptake, nature of the difficulty and routes of referral are described later in this document.

Details of FCN's services, operations and policies are available on the website at:

www.fcn.org.uk

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A message from Mark Suthern, Chair of FCN's Board of Trustees

I wanted to take this opportunity to thank our network for their ongoing support for the work of FCN. We are indebted to our volunteers and supporters, who allow us to continue 'walking with' farmers and their families during this period of significant change and uncertainty. We are helping to engender a positive mindset and offering hope and guidance.

FCN is known for providing on-the-ground help and a trusted network of support for our farming community. Whether the issue is personal or business-related, we are here to listen, to support and to help people to find a way forward. FCN is trusted for our confidentiality and non-judgemental approach – empathising and understanding, and helping people to consider next steps in a supportive environment.

Our proactive work to support farmers' health and wellbeing continues to evolve in important ways. This includes nurturing partnerships and collaboration, organising community events, conducting research and developing our FarmWell website. Established in 2019, FarmWell has for six years been providing farming people with a wide range of information around topics ranging from succession planning and rural crime to safety, mental health and animal disease.

A significant UK-wide partnership with Macmillan Cancer Support has seen our charities develop a range of initiatives, campaigns and resources to improve cancer support available to people in farming, rural and migrant worker communities. This work is already making a positive impact in our sector, and we were recently given an opportunity to input on the National Cancer Plan, advocating for the health and wellbeing of people in farming and rural areas.

We are also delighted that Baroness Minette Batters has been appointed as FCN's new Honorary President this year. We are extremely appreciative of Minette's long-standing support and advocacy for the work of FCN over the years. Minette's expertise, experience and reputation within the agricultural sector will undoubtedly help us in our mission to see farmers thrive, both now and in the future.

As we navigate the challenges and changes ahead, we thank everyone who gets involved in the work of The Farming Community Network.



Mark Suthern

Date: 2 July 2025

THE FARMING COMMUNITY NETWORK

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FCN: Health and wellbeing support across the UK

Since our founding in 1995, The Farming Community Network (FCN) has helped thousands of farmers and farming families to navigate difficult times and periods of significant change. 2025 marks our 30th anniversary – three decades of ‘walking with’ farmers and farming families, helping people to find a positive way forward.

I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank all our valued and dedicated volunteers, staff and board members for their dedication and support for FCN and those we serve in our farming communities. I especially want to pay tribute to those gone before us, cherished volunteers and founders, especially Christopher Jones MBE. May they all rest in eternal peace.

Our thanks are also extended to our generous donors, partners and funders; without your support, FCN would not be here today nor achieved what it has in support of our farming and rural communities for over 30 years.

This past year has seen unprecedented support for the work of The Farming Community Network and we simply cannot continue to serve without support from many individuals, businesses, legacies, foundations and trusts, fundraising groups as well as from Government.

As we celebrate our 30th birthday, FCN’s ambition to ‘walk with’ farmers and members of our farming and rural communities in times of difficulty is vital and is arguably needed now more than ever before.

FCN is here to listen, to support and to help people in our farming communities - whether the issue is personal or business-related. This work is a core part of our charity, made possible thanks to our extensive network of volunteers who understand farming life and its unique challenges.

As we look to the future, we are developing our support services to ensure they continue to meet the changing needs of our vital farming community. Increasingly in recent years, we have seen the value and impact of our proactive work helping to improve farmers’ health, wellbeing and resilience.

As part of our proactive and preventative work we in FCN recently launched a new UK-wide partnership with Macmillan Cancer Support – which is helping to improve the support available to those living with cancer in rural areas. As part of this partnership we are working closely with Macmillan Cancer Support, including raising awareness in rural communities of the signs and symptoms of cancer and building referral bridges to and from Macmillan’s services.

Finally, and most importantly, as we navigate the challenges and changes ahead, we thank everyone who gets involved in the work of FCN. Our work is only possible thanks to our volunteers, staff and all those who support the charity through donations, collaboration and awareness-raising. Farming across the UK is a truly supportive community – and together we can continue to create a healthy and resilient future for farming and rural people.



Jude McCann

Date: 2 July 2025

THE FARMING COMMUNITY NETWORK

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT)

The directors, who are also the trustees, present their report and accounts for the year ended 31 March 2025. The directors have adopted the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) "Accounting by Charities" in preparing the annual report and financial statements of the charity.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

The company limited by guarantee now known as The Farming Community Network (FCN) took over the assets and activities on 1 June 2002 of the unincorporated charity Farm Crisis Network which was founded in 1995 by the Arthur Rank Centre and Agricultural Christian Fellowship.

The Memorandum of Association states:

"The objects of the charity are the relief of hardship and distress, amongst persons living and working in the agricultural, horticultural and related communities, by the provision of pastoral and practical support underpinned by a Christian ethos."

The activities of FCN are available to all in the agricultural and related spheres of life providing the following services:

- Pastoral and practical support, care and listening to people in crisis (by phone, face to face or through the internet)
- Information and networking service to people, primarily through on-farm visiting with a holistic approach to both farm household and business
- Advocacy on behalf of such people (e.g. for tenant farmers in discussion with landlords' agents or for farmers in discussion with banks, creditors or regulatory agencies)

OUR VISION

Helping to create a strong, resilient and thriving UK farming community - now and in the future.

We offer independent, objective and personal support to build resilience and stay strong through changing times. We aim to provide help before problems arise, as well as supporting those who are experiencing difficulty or crisis.

Who we support:

- Farmers, farming families and farm businesses.
- Wider agricultural sector and associated industries.
- Rural communities.

How we help:

- Encouraging resilient and supportive communities through our network of volunteers with farming knowledge who 'walk with' people.
- Promoting positive health, wellbeing and business resilience through our FarmWell programme/activity.
- Supporting farming and rural communities affected by inequities through partnerships and collaboration.

Our strategic priorities

Helping to improve the health and wellbeing of our farm community

This year FCN has helped to support the health and wellbeing of the farm community in a wide variety of ways.

STATEMENT OF PUBLIC BENEFIT

Please see page 3.

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DIRECTORS

The directors of the charitable company are its trustees for the purposes of charity law. The directors serving during the year and since the year end were as follows:

Mark Suthern (Chair)

Sally Steadman (Vice Chair)

Giles Bowring DL (Treasurer)

Barbara Bray

Amy Dixon

Peter Havers

Olivia Helmore

Sir Mark Hudson – resigned 23 October 2024

Revd Matthew Jeffrey

David Lodder DL – resigned 23 October 2024

Roger Mercer

Stuart Roberts

Bishop Mark Rylands

Robert Walrond

FINANCIAL REVIEW 2024-25

FCN enjoyed an outstanding year in 2024-25. Although some income streams show unfavourable year on year comparisons, the overall outcome was an exceptionally good one. The income and expenditure totals reflect the first year of the Joint Venture with Macmillan Cancer Support.

Farmers faced a number of challenges during the year, not least the very wet summer which made crop harvesting a particular challenge, with reduced yields. The decision of the new Government to change the expected grant regime and to introduce a severe reduction in the amount which could be passed on to the next generation without incurring inheritance tax were further blows to an industry struggling to make a decent return. The work of FCN is more relevant and important than ever.

FCN continues to work hard to ensure its income streams are as diverse as possible, so that it is not reliant on a particular source. We have engaged a Trust Officer to apply for grants and hope this will bear fruit in due course. We nurture our relationships with our major donors and all our supporters to ensure they are kept fully informed about FCN's work and initiatives.

Income

Total income was £1,794,750, an increase of 32% compared with £1,355,802 for 2023-24.

Voluntary income including grants also rose by 32%. Legacy income fell with FCN receiving in 2024- 25 £153,862 (£233,319 for 2023-24).

Grants received, excluding Macmillan, totalled £884,918, an increase of 72%. The contribution from Macmillan amounted to £376,523.

Unrestricted income amounted to £806,158 and restricted income was £837,826.

Expenditure

Expenditure increased by 38% to £1,392,725 compared with £1,009,262, for 2023-24, reflecting increased staff costs associated with the Macmillan project. The total number of full time equivalent staff employed increased to 24 compared to 16 in the previous year.

FCN saw an end of year surplus (net income) of £402,025. This resulted in a positive net movement in funds of £425,397 after gains on investments.

Investments

During the year, a net figure of £750,907 was invested in our long term investment portfolio, and we diversified our holdings by buying units in funds managed by CCLA, Newton and Sarasin who are all respected managers for charities. The Investment Committee meets twice a year to review the performance of these investments and make changes, subject to Trustees' approval. The Trustees believe a strong balance sheet is necessary in an uncertain

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world and underlines their commitment to long term support for the agricultural sector and its hard working people. In addition, FCN continuously explores new ways in which its resources could be deployed to further its objects.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

GOVERNANCE

Over the past few years, the trustees have been strengthening the governance of FCN with the formation of committees dealing with Governance, Audit and Risk, Nominations, and Investment with each committee being authorised to make recommendations to the Board.

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

The Farming Community Network is a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity governed by its memorandum and articles of association amended 15 July 2024. In the event of the organisation being wound up each trustee agrees to contribute £1 towards the costs of dissolution. The company is also registered with the Charity Commission for England & Wales and registered with OSCR in Scotland on 26 July 2024.

APPOINTMENT OF DIRECTORS

The maximum number of directors is 12. The maximum length of continuous service to 9. One of the directors should be nominated by the Agricultural Christian Fellowship and 1 nominated by the Arthur Rank Centre. One third of the Board of Directors should retire at each Annual General Meeting.

DIRECTOR INDUCTION AND TRAINING

New directors undergo training as to their legal obligations under charity and company law and are presented with copies of the Memorandum and Articles of Association as well as FCN policy documents which have been approved by the Board. The induction process involves meeting the national staff and other directors. Directors are encouraged to attend training events every 3 years.

ORGANISATION

The Board of Directors meets quarterly to administer the charity and receive reports on finance, activities and fundraising. Other items are reported as necessary. Day to day management of FCN is delegated by the Board to the Chief Executive.

RELATED PARTIES

FCN has no related parties; however close working relationships are maintained with the Arthur Rank Centre and the Agricultural Christian Fellowship. One director is nominated by ARC and one by ACF for representation on the Board of FCN.

RISK MANAGEMENT

The Board has undertaken a review of risk and the identified causes have been categorised as relating to:

- People
- Property & finance
- Reputation

The review of risks has led to the implementation of policies aimed at lowering the risks to which FCN is exposed as well as designated procedures should an incident occur. The Risk Management policy document is reviewed regularly and updated to ensure it is as up to date as possible.

LOOKING AHEAD: OUR ORGANISATIONAL STRATEGY (2025-2027)

Our priorities as a charity over the next three years stem from providing the necessary infrastructure for FCN to deliver our two core pillars of support, which can broadly be described as:

1) our proactive and collaborative work including the FarmWell website and related initiatives - such as FarmWell/Yarn in a Barn events, campaigns, training, projects, research; and our work to address health inequalities, such as through our partnership with Macmillan Cancer Support. This work is preventative in nature, trying to help farmers to avoid crisis and providing early intervention.

2) our core services and supportive work - including local casework and Helpline support provided by FCN volunteers and supported by our staff team. We Listen, Support and Connect.

It is hoped that greater investment in the medium and long-term into 'FCN FarmWell' activity could help to reduce the pressure on 'FCN Services', as we will be helping and assisting people before they reach a point of crisis. We will be placing a greater emphasis on the 'FCN FarmWell' activity in the future and carving out a niche in this space.

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In addition to the above two pillars of support, the following are some of the key areas FCN will focus on in the next three years:

- Investment in volunteers
- Investment in staff
- Focusing on our strengths
- Fundraising and financial sustainability
- FCN's UK-wide approach

RESERVES POLICY

The charity's policy is to strive to secure free reserves sufficient to meet committed expenditure and the running costs for a period equivalent to 12 months annual expenditure. It is considered that 12 months is necessary in order to ensure continuity of service during any period of reduced income. Free reserves at 31 March 2025 were £1,815,670 compared with unrestricted annual expenditure of £473,616.

TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES STATEMENT

The trustees (who are also directors of The Farming Community Network for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP 2019 (FRS 102);
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

STATEMENT AS TO DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION TO AUDITORS

So far as the trustees are aware, there is no relevant audit information (as defined by Section 418 of the Companies Act 2006) of which the company's auditors are unaware, and each trustee has taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as a trustee in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charity's auditors are aware of that information.

GOING CONCERN

After making enquiries, the directors have a reasonable expectation that the company has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Accordingly, they continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements. Further details regarding the adoption of the going concern basis can be found in note 1 of the financial statements.

This report has been prepared having taken advantage of the small companies exemption in the Companies Act 2006.

Signed on behalf of the Directors on 2 July 2025.



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INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES AND MEMBERS OF THE FARMING COMMUNITY NETWORK

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of The Farming Community Network (the "charitable company") for the year ended 31 March 2025 which comprise a statement of financial activities, a balance sheet and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102, The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2025, and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Act 2011.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the trustees annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

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Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the trustees' report (incorporating the directors' report) for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the directors' report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of our knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the directors' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Act 2011 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate and proper accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of directors' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.; or
- the trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies' regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the directors' report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

Other Matter

The comparative figures are unaudited.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement, set out on page 9, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

We have been appointed auditor under the Companies Act 2006 and section 151 of the Charities Act 2011 and report in accordance with those Acts.

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The specific procedures for this engagement and the extent to which these are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

- Enquiry of management, those charged with governance around actual and potential litigation and claims;
- Enquiry of entity staff in compliance functions to identify any instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations;
- Reviewing minutes of meetings of those charged with governance;

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- Reviewing financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

- Performing audit work over the risk of management override of controls, including testing of journal entries and other adjustments for appropriateness, evaluating the business rationale of significant transactions outside the normal course of business and reviewing accounting estimates for bias.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: <https://www.frc.org.uk/Our-Work/Audit/Audit-and-assurance/Standards-and-guidance/Standards-and-guidance-for-auditors/Auditors-responsibilities-for-audit/Description-of-auditors-responsibilities-for-audit.aspx>. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006 and to the charitable company's trustees, as a body, in accordance with Part 4 of the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members and its trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body and the charitable company's trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Signed:



Geoffrey Cox BA FCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)
For and on behalf of Dafferns Audit Limited
Chartered Accountants
Statutory Auditor
One Eastwood
Harry Weston Road
Binley Business Park
Coventry
CV3 2UB

Date: 2 July 2025

THE FARMING COMMUNITY NETWORK

(A CHARITABLE COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT for the year ended 31 March 2025

	Notes	General Unrestricted funds £	Designated Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
INCOME						
Donations and legacies	3	806,158	-	837,826	1,643,984	1,239,072
Income from charitable activities						
Resourcing programmes		132,310	-	-	132,310	103,757
Income from other trading activities						
Investment income		18,456	-	-	18,456	12,973
Total income		956,924	-	837,826	1,794,750	1,355,802
EXPENDITURE						
Cost of raising funds	7	59,222	-	19,265	78,487	66,031
Charitable activities	6	266,526	147,868	899,844	1,314,238	943,231
Total expenditure		325,748	147,868	919,109	1,392,725	1,009,262
Net income/(expenditure)		631,176	(147,868)	(81,283)	402,025	346,540
Net transfers between funds		-	-	-	-	-
Gains/(losses) on investments		23,372	-	-	23,372	81,750
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS		654,548	(147,868)	(81,283)	425,397	428,290
Fund balances brought forward	15	1,161,122	356,000	301,778	1,818,900	1,390,610
FUND BALANCES CARRIED FORWARD	15	1,815,670	208,132	220,495	2,244,297	1,818,900

The notes on pages 16 to 21 form an integral part of these financial statements.

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BALANCE SHEET as at 31 March 2025

COMPANY REGISTRATION NUMBER: 04429778

	Notes	2025 £	2024 £
FIXED ASSETS			
Tangible assets	11	19,395	-
Investments	12	1,215,434	451,200
		1,234,829	451,200
CURRENT ASSETS			
Debtors	13	119,648	25,875
Bank and cash balances		948,731	1,389,984
		1,068,379	1,415,859
CREDITORS: amounts falling due within one year	14	(58,911)	(48,159)
NET CURRENT ASSETS		1,009,468	1,367,700
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		2,244,297	1,818,900
INCOME FUNDS			
Unrestricted funds			
General	16	1,815,670	1,161,122
Designated	16	208,132	356,000
Restricted funds	16	220,495	301,778
		2,244,297	1,818,900

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime and in accordance with FRS 102 SORP.

The financial statements were approved by the Directors on 2 July 2025 and signed on their behalf by:



M A E Southern
Director

The notes on pages 16 to 21 form an integral part of these financial statements.

THE FARMING COMMUNITY NETWORK

(A CHARITABLE COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

STATEMENT OF CASHFLOWS For the year ended 31 March 2025

	Notes	2025 £	2024 £
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES			
Net income/ (expenditure) for the year		425,397	428,290
Adjustments for:			
Depreciation	11	9,698	15,664
(Increase)/ decrease in debtors	13	(93,773)	(22,285)
Increase/ (decrease) in creditors	14	10,752	9,896
Interest received		(18,456)	(12,973)
Revaluation (gain)/ loss on investment	12	(23,372)	(81,750)
Net cash from/ (used in) operating activities		310,246	336,842
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES			
Sale of investments	12	39138	434,231
Purchase of tangible fixed assets	11	(29,093)	-
Purchase of investments	12	(780,000)	(278,749)
Interest received		18,456	12,973
Net cash from/ (used) in investing activities		(751,499)	168,455
CHANGE IN CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS IN THE YEAR			
		(441,253)	505,297
Cash and cash equivalents brought forward		1,389,984	884,687
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS CARRIED FORWARD		948,731	1,389,984
ANALYSIS OF CHANGES IN NET DEBT			
Cash and cash equivalents		948,731	1,389,984

The notes on pages 16 to 21 form an integral part of these financial statements.

THE FARMING COMMUNITY NETWORK

(A CHARITABLE COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

at 31 March 2025

1 ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Company and charitable status

The Farming Community Network, a public benefit entity, is incorporated in England and Wales as a company limited by guarantee not having a share capital. Each member has undertaken to contribute to the assets in the event of winding up a sum not exceeding £1. The charitable company is a registered charity. The registered office is given on page 2.

Basis of preparation and assessment of going concern

The financial statements are prepared on a going concern basis under the historical cost convention, modified to include certain items at fair value, in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice "Accounting and Reporting by Charities (SORP 2019)" applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable to the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), issued in October 2019, the Companies Act 2006, the Charities Act 2011 and the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2025 and UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

The significant accounting policies applied in the preparation of these financial statements are set out below. These policies have been consistently applied to all years presented unless otherwise stated.

Funds

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the Directors in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity and which have not been designated for other purposes. Designated funds are unrestricted funds set aside by the Directors out of unrestricted general funds for specific future purposes or projects. Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors or which have been raised by the charity for particular purposes. The costs of raising and administering such funds are charged against the specific fund.

Income recognition

All incoming resources are included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SoFA) when the charity is legally entitled to the income after any performance conditions have been met, the amount can be measured reliably and it is probable that the income will be received.

For donations to be recognised the charity will have been notified of the amounts and the settlement date in writing. If there are conditions attached to the donation and this requires a level of performance before entitlement can be obtained then income is deferred until those conditions are fully met or the fulfilment of those conditions is within the control of the charity and it is probable that they will be fulfilled.

No amount is included in the financial statements for volunteer time in line with the SORP. Further detail is given in the Trustees' Annual Report.

For legacies, entitlement is the earlier of the charity being notified of an impending distribution or the legacy being received. At this point income is recognised. On occasion legacies will be notified to the charity however it is not possible to measure the amount expected to be distributed. On these occasions, the legacy is treated as a contingent asset and disclosed.

Expenditure recognition

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs related to the category. Expenditure is recognised where there is a legal or constructive obligation to make payments to third parties, it is probable that the settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

Taxation

The charity is an exempt charity within the meaning of schedule 3 of the Charities Act 2011 and is considered to pass the tests set out in Paragraph 1 Schedule 6 Finance Act 2010 and therefore it meets the definition of a charitable company for UK corporation tax purposes.

THE FARMING COMMUNITY NETWORK

(A CHARITABLE COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

Tangible Fixed assets and depreciation

Tangible fixed assets are initially recorded at cost. Depreciation is provided on all fixed assets at rates calculated to write off the cost, less estimated residual value based on prices prevailing at the date of acquisition, of each asset evenly over its expected useful life as follows:

Office equipment and motor vehicles - 3 years straight line

Investments

Investments are recognised initially at fair value which is normally the transaction price excluding transaction costs. Subsequently, they are measured at fair value with changes recognised in 'Gains/(losses) on investments' in the SoFA if the shares are publicly traded or the fair value can otherwise be measured reliably.

Going concern

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis as the trustees believe that no material uncertainties exist. The trustees have considered the level of funds held and the expected level of income and expenditure for 12 months from authorising these financial statements. The budgeted income and expenditure is sufficient with the level of reserves for the charity to be able to continue as a going concern.

2 CRITICAL ACCOUNTING JUDGEMENTS AND KEY SOURCES OF ESTIMATION UNCERTAINTY

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, which are described in note 1, the Directors are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised if the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods if the revision affects both current and future periods.

The Directors do not consider there are any critical judgements or sources of estimation uncertainty requiring disclosure beyond the accounting policies listed above.

3 INCOME – DONATIONS AND LEGACIES

	General Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2025 £	2024 £
Voluntary income				
From churches	57,215	3,386	60,601	53,053
From events & activities	-	21,741	21,741	29,365
From individuals and other organisations	107,379	22,622	130,001	398,867
Legacies	150,775	3,088	153,863	233,319
Gift aid tax refunded	16,337	-	16,337	11,447
Grants received (see note 4)	474,452	786,989	1,261,441	513,021
	806,158	837,826	1,643,984	1,239,072

For 2024, £710,251 was general unrestricted income and £528,821 was restricted income.

THE FARMING COMMUNITY NETWORK

(A CHARITABLE COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

4 GRANTS RECEIVED

	General Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2025 £	2024 £
DEFRA and Regional Development Agencies	-	174,644	174,644	102,917
Richard Oatley Foundation	-	75,000	75,000	75,000
NFU Mutual Charitable Trust	-	75,000	75,000	80,000
Northern Gas Networks	-	32,535	32,535	-
P D Hook	10,000	-	10,000	10,000
Welsh Government	-	31,262	31,262	-
Macmillan Cancer Support	-	376,523	376,523	-
Mercer Family	-	-	-	10,000
Lloyds Banking Group	200,000	-	200,000	-
Paragon Vet	5,277	-	5,277	-
Dorset Training	10,000	-	10,000	-
Agrovista	10,000	-	10,000	10,000
Hutchinson Charitable Trust	10,000	-	10,000	8,000
Hook 2 Sisters	10,000	-	10,000	10,000
ETRD	10,000	-	10,000	-
Quality Equipment	6,245	-	6,245	5,219
Silostop	10,000	-	10,000	-
Lord Leverhulmes Charitable Trust	-	-	-	10,000
Agri	-	-	-	15,082
Diana Startin Charitable Trust	-	-	-	5,000
Heathfield Show	5,000	-	5,000	-
LKAB	-	-	-	5,000
L J Betts	-	-	-	5,000
LMWDC Ltd	-	-	-	9,261
Anon	-	-	-	21,095
Pitchup	-	-	-	10,000
Huggate World Farms	-	-	-	5,000
Cranswick	-	-	-	15,000
Openfield	-	-	-	5,000
Rulewood	-	-	-	5,000
Other grants ≤ £5,000	187,930	22,025	209,955	91,447
Total grants per Note 3	474,452	786,989	1,261,441	513,021

For 2024, £216,316 was general unrestricted grant income and £296,705 was restricted grant income.

5 UNPAID VOLUNTARY SERVICES

The value of unpaid voluntary services provided by individuals has not been included within the Statement of Financial Activities as either income or expenditure. In the year under review that value is calculated as £338,224 (2024: £290,610), representing entirely volunteer costs (please refer to Trustees' Report for further information). If this value was included the Statement of Financial Activities would be revised with both income and expenditure increasing by £338,224.

6 ANALYSIS OF EXPENDITURE ON CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	Activities undertaken directly £	Support costs £	Total £
Local activity	569,262	230,843	800,105
Publicity	187,920	75,686	263,606
Supporting volunteers	104,782	41,627	146,409
Training	73,843	30,275	104,118
	935,807	378,431	1,314,238

£899,844 (2024: £318,510) of the above costs were attributable to restricted funds. £147,868 (2024: £nil) attributable to designated funds, and £266,526 (2024: £624,721) attributable to unrestricted funds.

THE FARMING COMMUNITY NETWORK

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7 ALLOCATION OF SUPPORT COSTS

	Local activity £	Publicity £	Supporting volunteers £	Training £	Subtotal £	Raising funds £	Total £
Salaries and wages costs	110,540	36,242	19,933	14,497	181,212	55,981	237,193
Travel	11,320	3,711	2,041	1,485	18,557	2,834	21,391
Office administration costs	51,031	16,732	9,202	6,693	83,658	10,551	94,209
Depreciation	5,915	1,940	1,067	776	9,698	-	9,698
Governance costs	52,037	17,061	9,384	6,824	85,306	9,121	94,427
	230,843	75,686	41,627	30,275	378,431	78,487	456,918

£19,265 (2024: £6,532) of the above raising funds costs were attributable to restricted funds. £59,222 (2024: £59,499) of the above raising funds costs were attributable to unrestricted funds.

8 GOVERNANCE COSTS

	2025 £	2024 £
Legal and professional fees	79,020	43,207
Audit and accountancy	9,000	8,626
Board expenses	6,245	10,742
	94,265	62,575

The auditor's remuneration amounts to an audit fee of £5,250 (2024: £5,000) and other services of £3,750 (2024: £3,626).

9 STAFF COSTS

	2025 £	2024 £
Wages and salaries	776,857	561,061
Social security costs	67,267	46,504
Other pension costs	79,627	55,043
	923,751	662,608

The average number of employees, including part-time, during the year was 29 (2024: 22). The full time equivalent number was 24 (2024: 16).

The company operates a defined contribution pension scheme. The charge for the period was £79,627 (2024: £55,043). The defined contribution liability is allocated to unrestricted funds.

The number of employees who received total employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) of more than £60,000 is as follows:

£80,000 - £90,000	-	1
£100,000 - £110,000	1	-

10 DIRECTORS' REMUNERATION AND KEY MANAGEMENT PERSONNEL

No remuneration was paid to Directors for their services, and £688 (2024: £841) was paid as reimbursement of travel expenses to 3 (2024: 3) of the trustees.

The total amount of employee benefits received by key management personnel is £120,322 (2024: £91,554).

11 TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Office Equipment and Motor Vehicles £
Cost or valuation:	
At 1 April 2024	123,105
Additions	29,093
Disposals	(39,331)
At 31 March 2025	112,867
Depreciation:	
At 1 April 2024	123,105
Charge for the year	9,698
Eliminated on disposal	(39,331)
At 31 March 2025	93,472
Net book value	
At 31 March 2025	19,395
At 1 April 2024	-

THE FARMING COMMUNITY NETWORK

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12 INVESTMENTS	2025 £	2024 £
Market value at 1 April 2024	451,200	524,932
Acquisitions at cost	780,000	278,749
Sales proceeds from disposals	(29,093)	(434,231)
Gain/(loss) in the year	23,372	81,750
Market value at 31 March 2025	1,215,434	451,200

Investments at market value comprised:		
Rathbone Unit Trust Management Core Investment Fund for Charities Income Fund	416,001	410,233
M&G Equities Investment Fund for Charities (Charifund) Acc	-	40,967
BNY Mellon Newton Growth and Income Fund for Charities Acc	272,619	-
Sarasin Endowments Fund Acc	271,902	-
CCLA COIF Charities Investment Fund Acc	254,912	-
	1,215,434	451,200

13 DEBTORS	2025 £	2024 £
Amounts falling due within one year		
Trade debtors	62,732	20,300
Prepayments and accrued income	49,682	575
Gift Aid tax refund	7,054	5,000
	119,648	25,875

14 CREDITORS	2025 £	2024 £
Trade creditors	12,671	16,081
Other taxes and social security	18,768	12,503
Other creditors	17,083	11,075
Accrued expenses	10,389	8,500
	58,911	48,159

ANALYSIS OF MOVEMENTS IN DEFERRED INCOME:	2025 £	2024 £
At 1 April 2024	-	7,917
Income deferred in year	-	-
Amount released in year	-	(7,917)
At 31 March 2025	-	-

Deferred income represents funding income received in advance.

15 FUNDS ANALYSIS	General Unrestricted fund £	Designated Unrestricted fund £	Restricted fund £	2025 £	2024 £
Tangible fixed assets	1,234,829	-	-	1,234,829	451,200
Current assets	639,752	208,132	220,495	1,068,379	1,415,859
Liabilities	(58,911)	-	-	(58,911)	(48,159)
Net assets	1,815,670	208,132	220,495	2,244,297	1,818,900

THE FARMING COMMUNITY NETWORK

(A CHARITABLE COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

16	MOVEMENT IN FUNDS	At 1 April 2024 £	Transfers £	Incoming resources £	Outgoing resources £	At 31 March 2025 £
	Restricted funds					
	Voluntary income	136,778	-	72,862	(103,412)	70,495
	Richard Oatley Foundation (Projects in South West)	35,733	-	75,000	(72,778)	37,955
	Macmillan Rural Communities Project	-	-	376,523	(376,523)	-
	Waitrose Farmwell 2024-27 support programmes	165,000	-	127,144	(180,099)	112,045
	Vulnerability and Carbon Monoxide Allowance Collaborative Project – Northern Gas Networks	-	-	32,535	(32,535)	-
	Farmwell Wales - Welsh Government	-	-	31,262	(31,262)	-
	DEFRA bTB support	-	-	47,500	(47,500)	-
	NFU MCT for Farming Community support	-	-	75,000	(75,000)	-
		301,778	-	837,826	(919,109)	220,495
	Unrestricted funds					
	Designated	356,000	-	-	(147,868)	208,132
	General	1,161,122	-	956,924	(302,376)	1,815,670
		1,818,900	-	1,794,750	(1,369,353)	2,244,297

17 ULTIMATE CONTROLLING PARTY

The charity is under the control of its Board of directors/trustees.

18 RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

There are no related party transactions during the period (2024: £nil).