

## Report to the Nineveh Charitable Trust

September 2023

We are hugely grateful to the trustees of the Nineveh Charitable Trust for the very generous grant of £6072 made in September 2022 towards our Farm Discovery programme in Kent. Thank you. Please find below details of the difference your amazing funding made.

### The Country Trust

Since 1978 we have been working to deliver food, farming and countryside experiences to children whose potential is only limited by their access to opportunities. As a nation we've lost connection with the land that sustains us. Although this is often poorly recognised, this detachment has huge, urgent ramifications for health, sustainability and equality. Farms and the working countryside are incredible places to get first-hand experience of the big issues of our time, how we are going to feed the world, protect the natural environment and offset climate change. And yet over a fifth of children aged 6-11 years do not know what a harvest is, with as many as 1 in 4 children having never visited a farm<sup>1</sup>. Learning about food, and food production, is not prioritised in the education system.

### Our aim

Through our four key programmes - Farm Discovery Day Visits, Countryside Discovery Residentials, Food Discovery programmes teaching children to grow, cook and explore food, and Farm in a Box, bringing the farm to the classroom - we aim to provide children with meaningful learning experiences that they will remember for years to come and support them to build the link between the food they eat, their own health and the health of the planet.

### Our 5 Year Plan:

Covid-19 proved to be a catalyst of rapid change for the Trust. The need and demand for our work has grown significantly.

In response, our new Five-Year Plan has a refreshed vision and ambition to increase the number of children we reach.

### The 5 pillars of our new plan are:

- **Growth:** Significantly increase engagement to 120,000 children per annum by year 5
- **Diversification:** Finding new ways to deliver quality programmes at scale, ourselves, or with and through others. Supporting teachers to sustain the impact of our work and farmers to engage in farm education
- **Influence:** Focussing our effort to influence policies that support our mission in food, farming, and education
- **Impact and Evaluation:** A new Impact Framework including our **Theory of Change** will enable us to measure and share the difference we make. We will build academically robust evidence for farm education too
- **Infrastructure:** Developing our team, knowledge, IT and resources to support growth and development

### Our work

We work with children from low-income families, schools and groups providing for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEN/D), young carers, looked after, vulnerable and refugee children and their families. Child poverty is associated with adverse developmental, health, educational and long-term social outcomes, including: poor physical health (linked to chronic conditions and obesity); poor mental health/ low sense of wellbeing; experience of stigma and bullying from peers; academic underachievement; subsequent employment difficulties; and social and cultural deprivation. The positive role of nature in supporting wellbeing is well documented, however, children from lower income households, disabled children and non-white British children have less access to greenspace and are less likely to have a connection with it.<sup>2</sup> We know that children, particularly disadvantaged children, are experiencing a growing divide between themselves and the land that sustains us, but this detachment is also something that food producers are encountering. Farmers are speaking increasingly about their disconnection from consumers and their concerns about the future of the agricultural economy.

<sup>1</sup> [Bluestones National Park Resort Survey 2018](#)

<sup>2</sup> [The Children's People and Nature Survey for England: Summer Holidays 2021 \(Official Statistics\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

## Our impact

Young people who engage with The Country Trust:

- Better understand how to interact (touch/smell/observe/listen, even taste) with the natural world around them
- Are excited to use/discuss what they have learnt
- Feel supported/more confident to try new things
- Feel more curious about the world, particularly food, farming and the countryside
- Better understand connections between their lives and food, farming and the countryside

Teachers who engage with The Country Trust:

- Place greater value on real-world learning experiences

Parents who engage with The Country Trust:

- Feel more curious about how their lives connect to food, farming and the countryside

Longer term, we are aiming to set children off on a path towards being more likely to make positive and informed choices on food, farming and countryside, being keener to try new things, demonstrating a greater belief in their own agency and being able to imagine a wider range of possibilities, including pursuing hobbies or careers relating to food, farming and the countryside.

## Our programmes

Thanks to the Trustees of the Nineveh Trust and other generous supporters, we were able to deliver the following Farm Discovery visits in Kent in the 2022/23 academic year:

### Run 2x visits to Orchard Place, Wrotham Heath -

X21 Year 1 children from St Annes and Guardian Angels visited 21/3/23

X30 Year 1 children from William Davis visited 4/5/23

*"It's been a brilliant day and I've learnt so much. If I had walked round myself I wouldn't have got much from the day"* Teaching Assistant, Willaim Davis

### Run 3x visits to Romshed Farm, Sevenoaks -

X30 Year 4 children from Ashburnham visited 3/5/23

X31 Reception children from Proverest Primary visited 9/5/23

X28 Reception children from Proverest Primary visited 10/5/23

*"I really loved my day and I want to come back and work here when I'm older"* Girl, age 5, Proverest

*"This was the best day of my life!"* Boy, age 5, Proverest

### Run 2x visits to Beggars Barn, Penshurst -

X28 Year 3 children from New Monument Primary visited 16/5/23

X30 Year 3 children from Broadmere visited 22/5/23

*"I've learnt so much, it's been so wonderful"* Teaching Assistant, New Monument

*"Please can we come again!"* Child, New Monument

*"After time in the woodland- I feel so peaceful, I feel inspired, I feel so calm"* Child, Broadmere

### Run 3x visits to Mote Farm, Sevenoaks -

X22 Year 4 children from Griffin Primary visited 24/5/23

X27 Year 4 children from Harris Primary visited 7/6/23

X25 Year 4 children from Harris Primary visited 8/6/23

*"I've never been to the countryside before"* Child, Harris Primary

*"I loved it"* Child, Harris Primary

*"I want to be a farmer when I grow up- me too- lets work together here!"* Children, Harris Primary

*"I feel so peaceful and tranquil"* Child, harris Primary

*"This is the best trip I've ever done"* Member of staff, Harris Primary

### Run 1x visit to Brice Church Farm, Rochester -

X28 Year 6 children from Horizon Primary visited 16/6/23

*"I had such a brilliant day and learnt so much"* TA, Horizon Primary

*"Really enjoyed milling the wheat, I never knew that before"* Child, Horizon Primary

### Run 2x visits to Vinson Farm, Sittingbourne -

X31 Year 2 children from Kingfisher Community school visited 22/6/23

X29 Year 3 children from Milton Court Primary visited 23/6/23

*"In 25 years of teaching this has been one of the best trips I've ever done"* Class teacher, Kingfisher Community Primary

*"I never knew that's where my bread came from"* Child, Milton Court

### **Run 1x visit to Home Farm, Chevening -**

X27 Year 2 children from Ashmole visited 30/6/23

*"This has been the best day ever!"* Child, Ashmole

*"I really want to be a farmer when I grow up"* Child, Ashmole

### **Run 2x Visits to Torry Hill Farm, Sittingbourne -**

X27 Year 1 children from Myatt Garden Primary visited 6/7/23

X27 Year 1 and 2 children from Myatt Garden Primary visited 12/7/23

*"This is amazing!"* Child, Myatt Garden

*"Wow- I didn't know potatoes grew like that before"* Child, Myatt Garden

### **Run 4x visits to Wye Community Farm, Wye -**

X7 Year 6 children from The Orchard school visited 2/5/23

X7 Year 3 children from The Orchard school visited 3/5/23

X7 Year 4 children from The Orchard school visited 9/5/23

X7 Year 3 children from The Orchard school visited 10/5/23

*"This is my best day ever"* Child

### **Run 1x visit to Loddington Farm, Maidstone -**

X41 Reception children from Molehill Primary visited 17/5/23

*"The teacher asked the children who had a good day and all 41 put their hands up!"* Coordinator

### **Run 1x visit to Quex Farm Park, Birchington -**

X27 Year 2 children from Water Meadows Primary visited 12/6/23

*"All the children couldn't get enough of milling the wheat!"* Session report, coordinator

### **Run 1x visit to Godmersham, Canterbury -**

X30 Reception children from St Nicholas CofE visited 13/6/23

When pond dipping - *"Look at all the treasures we've found"* Child, St Nicholas CofE

### **Run 2x visits to Nonington Farms, Canterbury -**

X27 Year 5 children from Pilgrams Way visited 15/6/23

X28 Year 5 children from Pilgrams Way visited 22/6/23

*"I want to be a farmer now"* Child, Pilgrams Way

## **Farm Discovery Visits**

Visits to real working farms and estates are central to all Country Trust programmes. Every year, we work with forward-thinking farmers and estate managers to welcome thousands of disadvantaged children out into the countryside, to gain in-depth, hands-on experiences of food and farming. Working closely with our farmer hosts, group leaders and teachers, we tailor our Farm Discovery visits carefully to the needs of the class or group, providing engaging learning that complements the national curriculum. We introduce children to crops and livestock, encourage them to question and explore food production and roles in agriculture and discover how farming impacts all our lives.

Based on feedback from teachers and children who partook in our Farm Discovery programme in 2022/2023 we know that we are enabling children to find out first-hand how their lives are connected to farms and farming by discovering how farms are an integral part of the journey of food and where it comes from.

## **Impact on children:**

- 88% of the children who gave feedback said they'd definitely like to go back to the farm with an additional 9% saying they probably would.
- 89% of children felt that farms were important with a further 10% feeling that they probably were.
- 99% of teachers felt that all or most of their children had enjoyed the visit with 89% of teachers feeling that all of them had.
- 99% of teachers said that they observed that all or most of their children were excited to talk to each other about what they were learning and doing.
- 95% of teachers said that all or most of the children wanted to talk to the farmer and/or coordinator about what they were learning
- 95% of teachers felt that all or most of their children had talked about or referred to their farm visit after the visit.
- 94% of pupils said that they had done something for the first time during their visit.
- 92% of children said that they would like to find out more about farming.

### Impact on teachers:

- 97% of teachers felt better equipped to bring elements of farming into the classroom teaching with 63% strongly agreeing. This figure is similar to last year
- 91% of teachers intended to use a farm visit next year as a core aspect of their curriculum planning with 65% strongly agreeing. This figure is slightly down from last year.
- 87% of teachers are now bringing elements of farming and the visit into their classroom teaching.
- 83% of teachers are using the natural world in their teaching more often following on from their visit.
- 83% of teachers are running more 'real life' learning activities with their pupils.

### Case study

On the 6<sup>th</sup> July 27 Year 1 children from Myatt Garden Primary visited Torry Hill Farm, Sittingbourne. The children LOVED bug hunting in the long grass and meeting the heifers. Farmer Arthur really enjoys sharing his farm with the children and he made them all laugh by demonstrating how the cattle handling system worked (See below picture!). They were able to pick raspberries straight off the bushes in the kitchen garden and they also had a go at digging up potatoes. In the afternoon, they all had a walk through lots of long grass down to cherry orchards- so many of the children were surprised that there was no tarmac pavement through the field!

*"This is the best day EVER!"* Child, Myatt Garden







### Our application

We have had lots of change in the last 12 months in Kent, with our coordinators Peter Midwinter, Laura Price and Emily Munn all leaving us. We have since recruited two new coordinators, Ailsa Khnana and Francesca Bellemy, who are both experienced teachers and specialise in teaching disadvantaged children in real world settings. They are currently building up their network of schools and farmer hosts and have a target of x56 Farm Discovery Visits between them in 2024. We would therefore be incredibly grateful if you would consider our application for a grant of £6979.71\* towards these visits.

### Budget breakdown:

|   | <u>Delivery Costs</u> | <u>Central Costs (30%)</u> | <u>H&amp;S Costs</u>  | <u>TOTAL</u>      |
|---|-----------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Organisation</b>                     | £76.65                | £23.00                     | £27.99                | £127.64           |
| <b>Pre-visit</b>                        | £76.65                | £23.00                     |                       | £99.65            |
| <b>Visit</b>                            | £153.30               | £45.99                     |                       | £199.29           |
| <b>Travel pre-visit</b>                 | £26                   |                            |                       | £26.25            |
| <b>Travel visit</b>                     | £26                   |                            |                       | £26.25            |
| <b>Volunteer Costs</b>                  | £31.50                | £9.45                      |                       | £40.95            |
| <b>Resources</b>                        | £10.50                |                            |                       | £10.50            |
| <b>Management contribution</b>          | £27.99                | £8.40                      |                       | £36.39            |
| <b>Coordinator Training and Support</b> | £43.05                |                            |                       | £43.05            |
| <b>Coach subsidy</b>                    | £262.50               |                            |                       | £262.50           |
| <b>Total</b>                            |                       |                            |                       | <b>£872.46</b>    |
|   |                       |                            | <b>Cost of 8x FV:</b> | <b>£6,979.71*</b> |

\*please note this total is entirely scalable

### Thank you-

Delivering our programmes at a time when the world is recovering from the impact of Covid has had its challenges, but never has our work been more valid, particularly in light of the rising cost of living, and this has spurred us on in our quest to grow and build on our achievements of previous years. Of course, none of our work would be possible without our generous supporters and so we expect to work closely with you, and with our beneficiaries, understanding your priorities as we continue to develop as an organisation and implement our 5 Year Plan.

Thank you for your support, it is very important to us.

