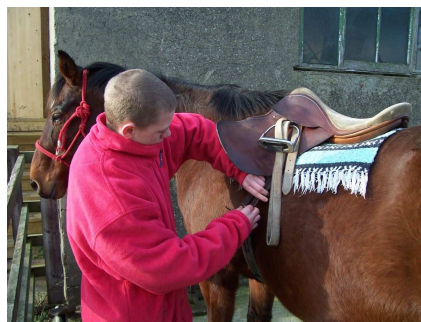


## Social Farming Thematic Initiative Case Studies

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>1. Case study title:</b>                       | Carlshead Farm, Yorkshire   |
| <b>2. Member State:</b>                           | United Kingdom  |
| <b>3. Contact details (if agreed to publish):</b> | E-mail: <a href="mailto:gareth@carlshead.co.uk">gareth@carlshead.co.uk</a><br>Website: <a href="http://www.carlshead.co.uk">www.carlshead.co.uk</a> |

### 4. Short description of the case study (please insert a photograph if you have one):

500 acre mixed farm that has made some of its sheep barns into fully equipped classrooms, IT room, art room and other facilities for a care farm, Carlshead Ltd.



### 5. Some key words to describe the case study:

Yorkshire - care farm – Carlshead - Young people - learning and/or behavioural difficulties - training – personal development - animal and horse care – mechanics – fishing - art projects - green woodworking - horticulture - employment - work.

### 6. Practical details of the social farming project/activity:

<b>Main target group:</b>	Young people usually aged 14-16 with learning and/or behavioural difficulties, some of who may also have special needs (there is a 50-50 split, male-female). They have been excluded or are at risk of being excluded from mainstream schools, and are referred by the Local Education Authority.
<b>Purpose:</b>	The care farm aims to give young people genuine job prospects, grounded in real practical skills. “They like it here and they enjoy it,” says Gareth. “It’s been a long time since some of them enjoyed themselves – and once you have that you can start teaching them things.” He adds: “I hope most of them have been inspired into the satisfaction of work, earning and having a job – because they have no clue about that when they arrive.”
<b>What activities are involved?</b>	The students are offered a broad range of alternative education opportunities including animal and horse care, mechanics, fishing, art projects, green woodworking and horticulture. There is a strong emphasis on personal

	development, and the students work towards courses accredited with the Open College Network, that provide GCSE equivalent points.
<b>Who started the project/activity?</b>	The Gaunt family.
<b>What was the inspiration or motivation?</b>	Farm diversification was one driver for the Gaunt family, but Gareth also has a strong social interest. He read about care farming in mainland Europe and became impressed how in Scandinavia, for example, care farms are used to help children with behavioural and other issues. "We have some big problems in UK society, and care farming really appealed to me," he says.
<b>Does anyone else support the initiative?</b>	The care farm has three full-time and four part-time staff. In addition to Gareth, there are three other Gaunt family members on the company board.
<b>When was the initiative first started?</b>	2004
<b>What is the current status?</b>	On-going

<b>Number of clients:</b>	Two groups of 4 = 8
<b>Number of days per client per week:</b>	Approx. 20-30 client days per week
<b>Working/care hours for each client per day:</b>	5 hours per day
<b>Geographical coverage:</b>	Yorkshire
<b>Other relevant details:</b>	The Gaunts took out a £450,000 loan to establish suitable premises etc.  A mentor, employed by Education Leeds, oversees student discipline and counseling – in addition to much of the associated paperwork. "It leaves us to do what we are best at," says Gareth.

### 7. Details of any agricultural/horticultural resources used:

See 'What activities are involved', above

### 8. Financial aspects of the project/activity:

<b>What is the main source of funding?</b>	Currently, funding is entirely from the Local Education Authority.
--	--

<b>What is the size of the budget?</b>	Annual turnover is around £150,000 per year
<b>Has funding been applied for and <i>not</i> received?</b>	??

### 9. Other important aspects of the project/activity:

The care farm was set up to help diversify the Gaunts' main farming business. The two operations are well integrated and are run by the same family members - but are legally and financially separate.

Gareth does not use formal teachers to support the students. Instead he uses people he describes as 'highly motivated self-starters' – who do not feel threatened by the students, but who can communicate well, have the energy to cope with them, and can inspire them. (Many work part-time and run their own business.) Using people like this, says Gareth, ensures that the teaching experience is more akin to an apprenticeship than a classroom.

### 10. Results of the project/activity:

<b>Direct Results:</b>	Gareth is confident of the benefits his care farm provides, saying: "It teaches the young people life skills, and it broadens their horizons, so that they have a bigger view of what they could do in life...They come out much more rounded and confident – they have fun."
<b>Strengths:</b>	The LEA pays £20 per hour for each student. With eight students per day, five days per week, Gareth says the care farm is viable.
<b>Weaknesses:</b>	Although Gareth has a good support from someone at the LEA who he says "really understands and believes in what we do, and gives us a lot of support", he worries about the potential consequences of relying on this one person. Funding pressures over the next few years could mean a reduction or termination in LEA referrals, says Gareth. "We might get the carpet pulled from underneath us – I don't know." He also doesn't have a written contract for the work he does.
<b>Wider Benefits:</b>	The care farm has also brought benefits to the Gaunts' main farm. It has helped with farm's diversification, and there is now much more vibrancy to the place. Says Gareth: "Parts of the farm that were never used before, such as the woodlands, are now used all the time. And there are now lots of staff around the place, rather than just one farmer, as before - the whole place is buzzing."

### 11. Future prospects and sustainability:

The overall project has been entirely self-funded, apart from a small Rural Enterprise Scheme grant received after starting up. However, Gareth says the care farm should be paying £50,000-£60,000 pa for his management time and rent of premises, but at the moment can only afford around

£20,000. “I would love to be able to make a little bit of a profit to invest in new courses and equipment, but so far that has not been possible,” he says.

To improve Carlshead’s viability and profitability, Gareth would like to increase student numbers to 12 per day - diversifying to new client groups such as people with Asperger’s Syndrome, special needs or mental health problems.

Another plan is to set up a city based café, with link to a rare breed pigs care farm. He thinks this will provide his client with “a far better working environment and job satisfaction” than the mainstream jobs normally expected of them.

### **12. RDP Links:**

Gareth has a good knowledge of European and other funding regimes but is critical of the programme’s features. As he points out, it typically covers only around 40% of costs, requires match funding (which can’t be from the public sector), and the money is short term. The latter may be OK for start-up businesses, but his care farm clients need continuity.

### **13. In conclusion - lessons to pass on:**

Gareth offers two tips for other/potential care farmers:

- 1) First, make sure the you run as a business and not a charity, ie make a good financial return. He says: “A lot of care farms are really underpaid for what they do and spend their lives chasing grants.... If we are going to persuade other farmers to go into care farming, we have to show them they can take some money from it – and by diversifying they can keep their farm going.”
- 2) You don’t need to ‘go big,’ is his second advice. Pointing to other farmers, he says, “We have all got a toilet, a kitchen and other facilities... it can be as simple as that.”