

Business Plan 2017-2020

Fordhall Community Land Initiative

1. Executive Summary

1.1 Background

The Fordhall Community Land Initiative (FCLI) is a ground breaking Industrial and Provident Society, which took Fordhall Organic Farm into community ownership in 2006 after a high profile national campaign, with the primary aim to 'improve the understanding of sustainable food and farming through the resource of Fordhall Farm'.

Fordhall Farm has been chemical free for over 65 years, after the late Arthur Hollins, organic pioneer, realised the harmful effects of chemical farming on the sustainability of the farming system. Arthur took over Fordhall Farm at only 14 years of age in 1929. By the 1950's Fordhall was a thriving organic dairy farm and the first in the UK to make yoghurts. By the 60's Fordhall yoghurts could be found in all major department stores together with small markets and health food shops. Following the death of Arthur's first wife in 1975, the dairy closed and the farm moved over to livestock, which it has consisted of ever since. Arthur developed a pioneering method of grassland management called Foggage farming and this system is also still used today. However, development pressures through the 90's pushed the tenanted family into a corner as they fought to save it from development. Arthur's children, Charlotte and Ben Hollins, in their early twenties fought to save the farm, but as young tenant farmers their options were limited and they were faced with having to raise over £800,000 in less than 6 months to save their families heritage.

The FCLI was formed to sell £50 non-profit making shares to the general public, thereby raising the £800,000 and placing the farm into community ownership. The campaign was successful and after purchasing the 128 acres of organic farmland in 2006 the FCLI offered a 100-year lease to Charlotte and Ben Hollins. They farm the land through their own company, Fordhall Farm Limited. This is a commercial limited company and manages a farm shop and the farms livestock whilst paying a rent to the FCLI. Fordhall Farm Ltd. is responsible for land management, but the FCLI has rights to utilise the land for community benefit. The farm business must always be seen as a separate entity to the FCLI however, the two will always work in a mutually dependent fashion.

1.2. Summary to FCLI and main aims and objectives

'The FCLI aims to improve the understanding of sustainable food and farming through the resource of Fordhall Farm by being an integral part of the community'

The official objects of the FCLI shall be for the benefit of the community and in particular:

(a) To advance education and provide facilities for recreation and other leisure time occupation in the interests of social welfare for the inhabitants of Market Drayton and the wider community, in organic farming methods, conservation, biodiversity, health, access, country life, heritage, wildlife and related subjects with the object of improving the conditions of life for the said inhabitants.

(b) To ensure farmland is managed sustainably for community benefit with the appropriate management for access, and to research sustainable farming through community land trusteeship, public involvement and other methods.

The FCLI achieves these objectives through all its activities both revenue generating and free.

1.3. Current Situation

Since saving Fordhall Farm from development the FCLI has come a long way. The FCLI is in a reasonably strong financial position, with regular and reliable revenue streams, plus it continues to receive regular volunteers as well financial contributions. It is vital that the organisation continues to move forward to maintain this momentum and its value as a local community asset.

Whilst an extensive renovation project completed in 2012 saw the introduction of some vital revenue generating activities to the Society and much improved office space, it left our volunteers and educational groups with limited facilities in our outdoor porta cabins.

It has long been in the Board of Directors plans to replace these with a purpose built bunkhouse for our volunteers, our regular community groups and to increase the opportunities for residential educational visits, as well as boosting our income generating potential.

With planning permission granted this project, which has been spoken about for ten years, is hopefully close to fruition. Once complete it will mark the end of all extensive capital works for the FCLI for the foreseeable future.

1.4 Summary

This Business Plan outlines the intention to spend £475,000 on the build of a new straw bale bunkhouse, an extended car park and other related development work to ensure our facilities meet the need of our local community.

This project will ensure the FCLI is offering safe, warm and welcoming surroundings/accommodation for our local young people, adults with learning facilities, volunteers, educational visits, and for members of the local community who use our facilities. The new building will also provide opportunities for our community business to grow its revenue generating activities, including onsite weddings, meeting room hire, and residential courses.

The FCLI remains exactly the sort of project the Policy document for Shropshire Tourism and Development and the Shropshire Community Strategy wishes to encourage. The project contributes to the local area through social inclusion, entrepreneurship, education, environmental improvements and awareness, and tourism.

Fordhall offers the unique experience to see and be part of the 'behind the scenes' aspect of a working organic farm. The FCLI has also won numerous national awards and been awarded flagship status for Social Enterprise in the West Midlands. Consequently, it is being used as a national exemplar project for other community run/owned schemes across the country. An aspect that continues to drive the FCLI to ensure it is doing its very best to benefit and work for its local community, thereby demonstrating to others what is possible.

2. Organisation Description

2.2. Vision and Guiding Principles

The vision of the FCLI is to utilise Fordhall Farm for community benefit in innovative and creative ways where involvement and education are focal throughout. We will maximise the benefits of Fordhall Organic Farm for our community and the natural environment in a self-sustaining manner.

We will create self-sustaining innovative and complementary activities at Fordhall which are engaging and fun for our community, as a national exemplar. Our community makes Fordhall unique. It is at the heart of all our successes and will be at the heart of all our future achievements.

Guiding Principles:

- The FCLI needs to remain in the public eye and become a national beacon by demonstrating itself as an excellent local working example.
- The projects the organisation chooses to pursue must be self-funding and will ideally include elements that generate a surplus. This is a virtuous cycle where regular income streams cover the core costs and these subsequently allow future projects to be initiated.
- The FCLI must maintain a good working partnership with the tenant farmer and be sensitive of his/her needs when initiating projects. The mutual dependency of the two organisations should be considered within each project.
- First and foremost Fordhall Farm and the FCLI are about passion and this must not be forgotten. Professionalism should be maintained at all times, but we must remember to remain welcoming and grounded. We must keep our feet on the ground and take Fordhall forward with pride.



Organisation Structure and Governance

The FCLI is a democratic organisation with a volunteer board of 13 members, voted annually from the membership. There are two institutional members with permanent seats on the board. These are:

- Shropshire Wildlife Trust (John Hughes)
- Tenant Farmer (Ben Hollins)

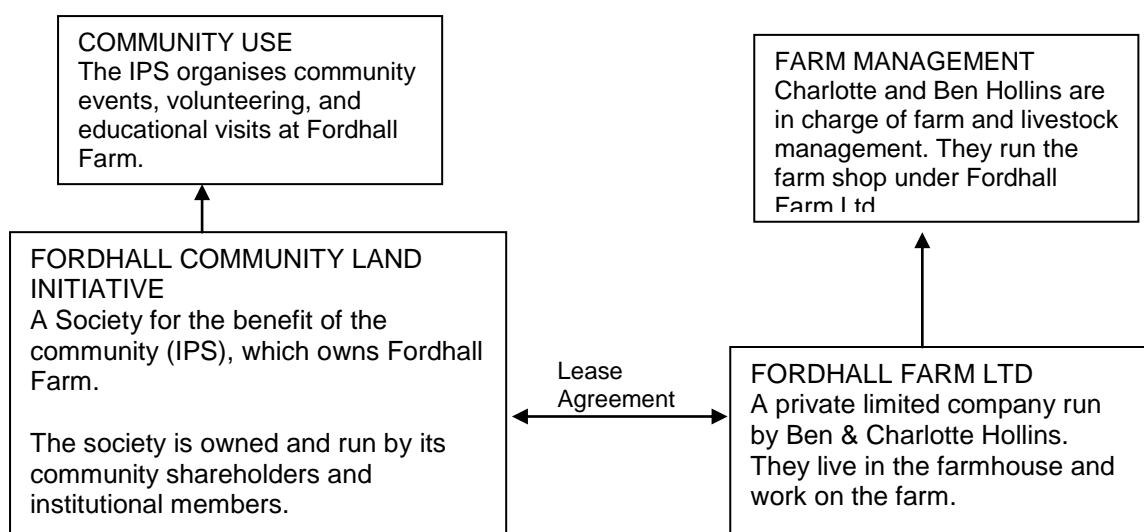
The board members hold full responsibility for the strategic direction and governance of the organisation. Once elected they are able to remain on the board for a maximum of three years, after which they must stand down. One third of the board must step down at each AGM. Whilst our membership is broad our board directorship is primarily local, when considering our rural nature.

The organisation utilises the skills on the board as much as possible. Consequently, each board member is required to be a member of a sub group. These sub groups have a greater influence on the strategic direction of specific areas of the business. These sub groups include: business and finance, education, fundraising and communications, building. The board meets quarterly and the sub groups meet in between these meetings or as needed.

The board employ a Manager (Charlotte Hollins) and a further 20 staff. A diverse mix of vital volunteers supports the management team – approximately 100 per annum. A full organisational structure can be found in the appendix.

Each year at the AGM members are asked for feedback, both for the past years performance, but also on the organisations future plans and strategies. Each year an annual strategy day is held with the locally employed staff (from cleaners up to management) and board members. With ideas fed in from local volunteers and service users in advance, staff and board unpick the last year and write the strategy for the next year together.

We are passionate that our vision each year should encompass the needs, desires and wishes of our local community and we do our best to ensure this is represented amongst our volunteer, staff and board member base.



2.3. Decision Making and the Project Team

The building sub group will oversee construction. Direct project management of the bunkhouse will be undertaken by Charlotte Hollins, the FCLI Manager. This will include day to day decision making. The manager will regularly report progress to the building sub group of the board.

The business and finance sub group of the board will oversee the budget and agree the budget prior to funding commitments.

Detail decisions on the build (such as render design, bug house design, carvings, colours etc) will be decided by the youth team, care farm and volunteers involved, all coordinated by the FCLI Manager.

The FCLI Volunteer Officer will oversee volunteers involvement with the project as will the FCLI Engagement Officer.

The project management team will be supported by additional administrative support brought into the FCLI office to cover the duration of the build.

Sources of Advice and Guidance external to FCLI

Tom Woolley – volunteer eco architect

Jemma Slater – contracted architect

Chosen construction company

Gordon Stewart – consultancy advice through the Plunkett Foundation

2.4. Products and Services

2.4.1. Events

The FCLI currently holds a number of key annual events. These include:

All events have an education focus, some are focussed on making the farm accessible and others are profit generators. All benefit the local community and they evolve according to the communities needs

2.4.2. Educational Training

Educational training can be offered in a variety of forms to a variety of groups and individuals and is integral to every activity the FCLI does whether explicitly or implicitly.

Current formal education relating to the national curriculum is offered to schools and special interest groups. 50 individual school visits were had at Fordhall Farm through 2016 operating on a break-even basis by employing a self-employed teacher.

Toilet facilities for school groups remain an issue. With only one outdoor compost toilet, groups are forced to use the three toilets residing in the Old Dairy, which are also used by customers to the farm shop and café. This can mean customers waiting for long periods of time, whilst children queue or vice versa. The time taken also impedes the lunch break of the school group, especially when two classes (60 pupils) are onsite.

Currently all educational visits are day visits from local schools, however we are keen to build on the experience we offer these children and those from nearby towns. We want to offer a 'real' farm nature experience. This involves seeing the farm at dawn and dusk. Experiences that can only be offered and wildlife that can only be seen with onsite accommodation facilities. Groups such as cubs, scouts and brownies will be targeted as well as schools as soon as we have suitable accommodation available.

Educational training is also offered to volunteers e.g. hedge laying, tree planting and fencing; and information about organic farming and community land ownership is dispersed to visiting groups through guided walks in the summer months. This is more often offered to the long term unemployed in our local community.

Day courses have been run at Fordhall for the last 4 years and have been growing in popularity. Their theme fits within our organisation aims and objectives and we are keen to build upon this. The new bunkhouse will open up opportunities for yoga and meditation sessions, and weekend residential courses. These will generate an income to support our other charitable objectives.

The FCLI is keen to build on the educational base that already exists but suggests that organised visits are not able to expand greatly without additional toilet and handwashing facilities. The new bunkhouse has been designed with this in mind. Five additional toilets have been incorporated (including one with disabled access) as well as outdoor washing facilities, storage facilities for coats and bags has been cleverly incorporated to some outdoor seating, there is a covered outdoor space to support picnic lunches and the indoor living space can be easily transformed into a class room setting.

2.4.3. Care Farm

The care farm operates twice a week, working under contracts from Shropshire County Council to offer care facilities to local adults with learning disabilities. Utilising individuals personal budgets, this project works hard to build confidence and independence in those who access the service.

Whilst mainly outdoors, this growing group only just squeeze into our portacabin at lunchtime and in the winter months they take up residence in our meeting room over lunchtimes which limits the income we can generate from it.

The new bunkhouse will have a purpose built brew room and large kitchen, big enough to accommodate this group throughout the year without impeding our other income generating activities.

2.4.4. Growing Confidence – Youth Project

This project is a five year funded project (2016-2021) from the Big Lottery in partnership with Shropshire Wildlife Trust, Plunkett Foundation, and the Field Studies Council Preston Montford. It will see the expansion of the Fordhall youth project and its replication through Shropshire Wildlife Trust reserves.

These young people conduct conservation and maintenance work around the farm with a view to building their confidence and self-esteem. All are struggling with conventional education (pre NEETs) and most will have personal issues they are dealing with, in the main coming from the disadvantaged communities in our surrounding towns and villages. Our team of dedicated and highly trained staff not only increase their practical skills base so they have something to put on a CV, but they also work with them to pull out their passions and enthusiasm to help them find their own path in life. The aim of this project is to assist the young people into training, further education or employment post 16/18.

Each lunchtime they cook their own lunch and require somewhere warm and sheltered. The porta cabin is currently the only space they have, which is neither ideal nor sustainable. The bunkhouse will provide cooking facilities as well as a specific brew room for those with muddy boots!

2.4.5. Volunteer Opportunities

There are a number of ways the public can volunteer at Fordhall. Volunteering at volunteer weekends in particular, provides a practical opportunity for supporters to become part of future developments and to feel a sense of ownership over the farm, especially for those feeling isolated in the local area of looking to add skills to their CV when seeking employment.

It is a key strategic aim of the organisation to increase opportunities for volunteering at Fordhall over the next few years to specifically benefit these members of our local community. To facilitate this we are keen to improve the facilities offered to volunteers. They are the backbone of our work, but they reside in the worst buildings on the farm. We want them to understand that they are valued and appreciated and an aspect of achieving that is ensuring they have somewhere warm, dry and clean to rest during their working day, or indeed somewhere to stay when volunteering for a longer period of time.

2.4.6. Opportunities to get involved

The FCLI's main educational focus is through involvement and engagement; this is what distinguishes Fordhall from other educational organisations. It is also the driving force through the fundraising campaign in 2006. The share issue allowed the public to be part of 'Charlotte and Bens passion and dream' and that dream has now evolved to become the combined dream of the local community.

The construction of this building has been specifically designed to ensure they can be involved with as many aspects of the build as possible; straw bale lends itself perfectly to this.

It is our intention to involve our volunteers, youth group, visiting school groups, care farm participants and other members of the local community with the construction of our bunkhouse. They will learn new skills throughout, but most importantly they will have an opportunity to leave their mark on Fordhall forever. The aim is to engage, empower and enthuse them.

Aspects of the build designed for volunteer involvement are: car tyre foundations, straw bale walls, external and internal rendering, greenwood structures externally, internal fixtures such as design and build of bunkbeds, bunkhouse external wall, green roof and timber shingles.

The FCLI believes that the best way of learning and engaging is through participation, enjoyment and empowerment: providing a valuable and memorable experience to visitors whilst encouraging a sense of ownership. This is the most important thing the FCLI can provide and is most definitely what sets us apart from the competition.

2.5. Financial Situation

The FCLI currently has £165,000 of cash reserves and a balance sheet value of £834,000. Other liabilities include interest free loans repayable to our members to the value of £46,300 and a £100,000 mortgage from Triodos bank repayable over 25 years (beginning September '06). The FCLI has an average turnover at the present time of £340,000 from which the main sources of revenue is from the café, grant aid, donations, rental income and newsletter subscriptions.

Whilst some surpluses are being made for re-investment, the FCLI does not have huge levels of cash reserves to invest in infrastructure without going below their reserves threshold of 6 months running costs.

The FCLI Board have therefore taken the strategic decision not to invest in any new projects at Fordhall unless external funding is awarded.

3. The Plan:

To replace the current unsightly portacabins with a purpose built comfortable bunkhouse for our volunteers and community users. For the last three years staff have enjoyed the luxury of new buildings, heating, indoor toilets and insulation. Yet our volunteers, who are a key part of our success, remain in drafty porta cabins without running water and with the use of the outdoor compost toilet. The new bunkhouse will be located close to where the portacabins currently reside in the House Field.

Outcomes:

1. To improve the infrastructure at Fordhall to allow it to improve the understanding and appreciation of food produced at Fordhall Farm to visitors
2. To increase the opportunity for the public to be actively involved with activities at Fordhall Farm through courses on straw bale construction
3. To improve the knowledge of the range of sustainable materials/techniques/energy available for the build.
4. To allow planned activities and projects to take place at Fordhall which increase its benefit to the local community.
5. To empower members of the community through their involvement with the bunkhouse.

Objectives:

- To build a straw bale bunkhouse which
 - i. provides stimulating and welcoming architecture that is integrated with Fordhall Farm
 - ii. uses materials and technology most appropriate to Fordhall and its environment, and which have the least effect on the natural environment to show best practice
 - iii. involves the wider community, not just professionals
- Made out of straw bales to facilitate the involvement of volunteers and members of the community through the construction phase.
- To consult and involve volunteers throughout the design stage.
- To communicate the building process effectively through the newsletter, social media and website to FCLI supporters and shareholders
- To create accommodation that sleeps 30 individuals in two dormitory rooms, plus two private rooms for teachers/coordinators.
- To provide one sleeping room with disabled access
- To provide three showers, five toilets, a social room to accommodate 30 people for lunch, a kitchen large enough to cook with groups of up to 6 people, a brew/muddy boot room, laundry room, outdoor handwashing facilities, outdoor covered social space, additional parking for 30-35 cars, improved access to the site.

Detailed Specification:

- Building to include:
 - Male and female dorms to sleep 10 in each, with space for lockers
 - Two private rooms with 2 beds
 - Space for additional 10 approx on camp beds in living space (beds to be cleared away when not in use)
 - Social area, and eating area – open plan to allow full flexibility of use. Space to sit 30 people on benches at tables.

- Small, fully functional catering kitchen (allowing the Wednesday group to cook jams and chutneys, and for FCLI to cater for courses/functions). Space for dishwasher, 6 ring cooker, fridge & freezer.
- Boot room, storage and wash room (with washing machine and dryer)
- Wood burner in social area
- Renewable energy to be included where possible such as for heating hot water – solar hot water.
- Toilets which are accessible for school groups outside as well as those inside, including one which is disabled access.
- External hand washing facilities
- 2 shower rooms – one to be accessible from outside as well as inside.
- Covered outdoor seating area for volunteers use in the day (to help keep inside clean!).
- Veranda around the building to connect areas via covered walk way
- A green roof
- PV panels to generate electricity
- Low energy external lighting required
- Materials
 - Locally sourced where possible
 - External veranda be built using local green timbers and traditional green wood working techniques that can involve our youth project
 - Internals to be finished in natural clays/lime plasters
 - Energy efficiency construction and high levels of insulation
 - Use recycled materials where possible
 - Finishes to be easy to maintain, keep clean and robust
- Car park area will have to be reassessed. Using grasscrete or similar in the area in front of the cabins which is occasionally used for staff parking.
- Its own sewage disposal system.

Use:

1. For volunteers to use as accommodation and for food on volunteer weekends (8-12 weekends of 20-30 ppl per year)
2. For young people to use who attend our Youth Project (12 young people 6 days a week through the academic year)
3. For our Wednesday group to use for drinks, lunch, making jams and chutneys (local adults with learning disabilities currently three times a week but with space to expand throughout the week)
4. A space to run residential courses and workshops (commercial basis)
5. Residential base for scouts, cubs, D of E, and brownies clubs – additional space can be created as camping opportunities, with showering and toilet facilities in the bunkhouse.
6. Accommodation opportunities for guests of weddings hosted at the farm.
7. Additional meeting room hire (commercial income source)
8. Additional children's and family activities for the local community throughout the year – they can use this as a base. Including holiday clubs.
9. Hire out for private parties/functions with FCLI doing the catering

How:

Slater Wilde Architects will work on the project. Their fee includes a feasibility study, meetings, travel and all designs up to and including submission for planning permission.

A QS report will be gathered at planning permission stage. This will provide a full and complete cost for the construction of the project and will provide the basis for future fundraising. Construction will not begin until funding is in place. This is likely to come from a mix of sources including shares, donations (from a targeted appeal) and grants (probably from more than one organisation).

When:

Planning Application submitted and full permission gained. Allowing time to apply for grants later this year and construction to begin next Spring/Summer 2018 (this is fair weather only construction).

Furthermore, there is over £30k of interest free loans from shareholders which are due to be repaid in 2017-8. We **must** contact them this year to encourage our supporters to generously extend these for a further 5 years. The Fundraising Sub Group strongly believe that the 'ask' will be made much stronger if we have a live project requiring capital investment in the pipeline. As the bunkhouse has been in our vision/strategy/plans since 2006 (early visionary sketch below), it is already familiar with members and expected. This is the natural project to hinge the extension of their loans to, but we must ask them this year to ensure we can adequately plan for the unlikely situation that they all say no!

The biggest financial risk to the FCLI at present is the interest free loans due to be repaid next year. This project gives us the best change to limit the impact of this and retain those funds for further investment.

What happens if we don't progress the bunkhouse this year?

The project would wait until FCLI is making a more of a surplus to reinvest, or until we are lucky enough to drop on a pot of money.

The ask to loan givers to extend their loans will be weak, and may not have the desired impact.

Construction of the bunkhouse will not take place in 2018. Delaying the expansion of our courses, and winter activities.

The unsightly porta cabins (below) remain on the farm for the foreseeable future and facilities for our volunteers will remain below standard and with it the ability to increase volunteering at Fordhall is limited.





Bunkhouse plans for 2018:



4. SWOT Analysis for the construction of the Straw Bale Bunkhouse

4.2. Strengths and Weaknesses

4.2.1. Strengths

- Charlotte and Ben Hollins were the face of the national campaign in 2006. Many supporters bought into them as individuals and their vision. Their continual presence and accessibility to supporters is a vital resource to FCLI.
- Fordhall Farm is a real working farm and a viable commercial business with the FCLI facilitating an insight to that commercial world.
- Fordhall is England's first community-owned farm and this alone provides a unique selling point that can never be taken away.
- The manager, Charlotte Hollins, successfully project managed the renovation of the Old Dairy a £700k+ project which involved PV panels, air source heat pump, green roof, hemp walls, sheep's wool, lime plasters and recycled newspaper in its construction.
- FCLI is in a strong financial position to begin new projects. Furthermore £150,000 has already been secured from grant aid towards the construction of the bunkhouse.
- The FCLI has a ten year history of successfully working with volunteers of all backgrounds, ages and skill sets. This puts us in a good position to build on this base and involve a greater section of the community with our build.
- The youth project and members of the care farm are keen and eager to support the construction of this project.
- The volunteer base at Fordhall is strong, committed and skilled. This project will not only increase their skills, but it will also capitalise on their existing skills such as joinery, greenwood working and landscaping.

4.2.2. Weaknesses

- The deputy manager to Charlotte recently left FCLI to pursue a more hands on career and so succession planning is a high priority for the board. However, the existing middle management staff team are strong and resources/training are being invested into strengthening that base through 2017-18.
- Car parking capacity is at its limit and therefore limits expansion in visitor numbers
- Limited accommodation facilities mean income from events, courses & weddings cannot be maximised.
- Current toilet facilities limit the expansion of educational activities
- State of current volunteer accommodation (6 bunkbeds in a cold and draughty porta cabin) does not allow us to expand our offer to volunteers or to school groups and often they have to be turned away.
- The look of the present porta cabins bring down the appearance and impression of the farm as a whole. They are unsightly and unattractive.
- There is a limit to the amount of land that can be developed and so each new development should be carefully considered with the tenant farmer before committing.

4.3. Opportunities and Threats

4.3.1. Opportunities

- The FCLI touches many buttons in today's social and economic climate. Climate change and energy crises mean that the general public are becoming more concerned with food production, the environment and supporting the local economy. Fordhall sits perfectly in all three categories exemplified by the enormous take up and continual success of the share issue. The general ethos of Fordhall will help sell any new courses / educational visits and volunteering opportunities.

- The FCLI has great potential to employ many local people within its future projects, at a time when redundancies are becoming more frequent and employment-generating activities receive great praise with the local council. This project will safeguard existing jobs whilst also creating at least one new post.
- Communities are looking to work together and to feel a sense of community spirit in light of the current economic climate. Our local community already feels empowered and proud of Fordhall's presence. Opportunities for them to get involved with this project should bring in new volunteers, and increase the sense of pride yet further for those who may not be able to get hands on, through the promotion of the community involvement it has generated.
- This project will require opportunities that will specifically benefit the more deprived members of our local community specifically those who are long term unemployed or who are suffering from rural isolation.
- The outside world views Fordhall as a forward thinking, ethically minded organisation and they are keen to see the momentum continue. As a result there is a large opportunity to gather more support from specific individuals/organisations with each new project. We hope that this (together with the increased awareness of the crowd funding model) will assist with a crowd funding campaign we plan to launch in the Autumn to financially support the bunkhouse project.
- Straw bale construction is an up and coming development method, whilst in its infancy still, our use of it at Fordhall will attract local/regional press and potentially visitors in the future (with an aim to share knowledge of the construction techniques used).

4.3.2. Threats

- Each of the 8000+ shareholders can ask for their shareholding to be refunded at any point. Upon such a request the organisation has up to 12 months to make the repayment. If a significant proportion were to cash in their shares the FCLI could not repay the value. Although the FCLI can refuse payment and hold onto its assets if the action were to be detrimental to the local community it serves.
- Competition is always a threat. At the present time there only a handful of places for people to volunteer outdoors. However, Fordhall offers something unique and different and the method of construction of eth bunkhouse will add to our USPs.
- As straw bale construction is still a relatively new method of construction the number of experienced builders available to tender will be small. Furthermore, these builders are likely not to be local to Fordhall and may not have experience of all aspects of the build, nor indeed the size of build we are planning. This could slow progress of the project and make project management more complex.

6. Marketing Strategy for activities

i. Demonstrating the need:

National.

There is a national need for our country to understand about food and the landscape. Included within this is a need to understand how to 'grow your own', the importance of local and organic food, energy use, sustainable living (and buildings) and land use. Our communities have changed over recent decades. Children and adults alike have become disconnected from their food and environment, and communities have become segregated. The growing of food and involvement with food can help bridge these gaps by encouraging communities to work together, support each other and reap the rewards of their hard work through the fantastic, healthy and tasty meals produced as a result.

The demand for projects such as Fordhall is evident by the 8000 strong shareholder base and the 200-300 volunteer base that the farm supports. Furthermore, the support that this farm received through the local and national press reflect people's thirst and desire to reconnect to the land and to support and be part of their food culture. As we learn more about peak oil and climate change over the coming months and years, the importance of local organic food and low-intensive food production systems will become ever more important. As a society we will have no choice but to work more closely with the earth's natural systems, we will have to move to a more localised food economy and we will have to re-learn the importance of healthy eating, seasons and the principles of growing. But perhaps most importantly, we need to learn to work together, to nurture our local communities and to set foundations for future generations. The demand therefore for an open access organic farm, which facilitates involvement and learning, could never be more apparent.

Fordhall can also contribute to a number of regional and national strategies including the Shropshire Community Strategy, Shropshire Strategic Development Plan, DEFRA's targets for environmental improvements and improved food awareness, the governments push to improve schools access to outdoor classrooms.

Local.

This project will address many local needs. Fordhall Farm, is part of Moreton Say Parish, which is recognised as a rurality deprived area, and perhaps the main need here is concerned with getting people active, outside, and interested in where their food comes from and the natural environment.

Fordhall will work closely with organisations including local schools, the local mental health team and members of the local community to fulfil this need through the new facilities on the farm. It has been proven many times that interacting more with nature and the outdoors can have positive physical and mental benefits (A conceptual framework for Green Care, Keele University, 2009). A board member of the FCLI, John Hegarty, conducts research on the area of eco-psychology. One such piece was carried out on the FCLI shareholders to understand why they purchased their shares and what they would like to see at the farm in the future. This feedback has directed much of the FCLI's strategy and forms our strongest evidence of need, as these are the voices of 8000 of our supporters and visitors. A small selection of the many responses received can be found below:

"Keep educating people, sharing experiences, and being honest to their development."

"I am keen for the farm to have educational facilities for all ages; inspiring people to become more aware of their environment and learning from it, connecting to it. I would hope that Fordhall is available to people in Market Drayton, especially young people who live in a rural setting but are disconnected

from it. I think that concentrating on education, in particular the younger generations, is a sensible way to perpetuate interest in these kinds of farming/ countryside issues."

"It would be great to see their plans for the education centre to come into fruition and for the farm to attract more of the local Market Drayton community into activities based here."

"My biggest wish would be for the Educational facilities talked about already. Children in particular will find this whole venture fascinating and I would imagine a considerable number will not have even heard of organic farming let alone know what it means. If children can be taught first hand about farming and in particular organic, their outlook on life will change which will reflect in due course on how they will want to eat in the future."

"I think there is huge potential for residential courses - and I would like to see them working perhaps with the Youth Hostel Association - I think that if they had a Hostel on the land - the farm could also benefit from the income from that as well."

"Become an educational/visitor attraction and a resource centre. Telling stories as well as encouraging visitors and volunteers to interact with the land and with others. A Blists Hill (Shropshire tourist attraction) equivalent for farming and agriculture with a focus on mobilising a community of shared interest."

"I would hope that children who visit the farm will be taught about the environmental challenges that face us all and how to contribute to saving our planet - after all, this is what is at stake."

"[Fordhall] has so many powerful stories attached to it - local food, animal welfare, farming with nature, who owns the land, etc. We need to tell these stories first hand by getting people onto the farm. This requires infrastructure; buildings, trails information etc. This needs to be done quickly to maintain the momentum."

Research has also been conducted through evaluations from our current volunteers and visitors to the farm.

What improvements could be made on the volunteer working weekends at Fordhall ?

"If it were possible to keep the rain out, maybe a 150 acre umbrella!". Tess.

"A bit more comfort / warmth in the evening!" Maureen.

"Better washing facilities and better hand washing facilities at toilet." James.

Would you come to a volunteer weekend again? (If not why not?)

"I will come but the conditions for overnight and feeding are a challenge even for a died in the wool person such as myself." Paul.

Quotes from feedback forms for 2009 FCLI Working Weekends.

Competition

7. Financial Statement

- **Viability of FCLI's current income streams**

The FCLI is keen to maximise its current income streams in conjunction with the generation of new ones. The development of the bunkhouse is one project that will facilitate the potential for this.

Furthermore it will safeguard those income streams that currently exist.

Cash flows showing all expected expenditure, revenue, profits and loss for projects combined.

	2016 Actual	2017 Budget	2018 Forecast	2019 Forecast	2020 Forecast
Core					
Income	99,781	104,574	74,711	76,953	78,492
Expenditure	125,822	152,475	122,525	124,975	126,225
	-26,041	-47,901	-47,813	-48,022	-47,733
Tearoom					
Income	136,266	145,804	156,011	162,251	167,119
Expenditure	138,437	139,016	143,186	147,482	150,432
	-2,171	6,788	12,824	14,769	16,687
Events					
Income	14,574	17,000	18,700	19,261	20,802
Expenditure	12,156	11,000	12,100	12,463	13,211
	2,418	6,000	6,600	6,798	7,591
Courses and childrens parties					
Income	4,131	3,900	5,850	7,800	8,190
Expenditure	1,642	1,400	2,100	2,800	2,912
	2,489	2,500	3,750	5,000	5,278
Yurts					
Income	8,188	10,750	11,825	13,244	13,641
Expenditure	1,415	2,750	2,833	3,059	3,120
	6,773	8,000	8,993	10,185	10,521
Newsletter					
Income	15,605	15,750	16,223	16,709	17,043
Expenditure	6,665	6,700	6,901	7,108	7,179
	8,940	9,050	9,322	9,601	9,864
Bunkhouse					
Income	1,000	5,000	243,000	233,250	6,250
Expenditure	4,758	5,000	228,594	221,445	3,662
	-3,758	0	14,406	11,805	2,588
Shares					
Income	3,250	3,500	3,850	4,000	4,200
Expenditure (shares refunded)	930	1,500	1,600	1,750	1,750
	2,320	2,000	2,250	2,250	2,450
Education, Care Farming & Youth					
Income	59,647	77,229	81,090	85,145	93,659
Expenditure	37,886	56,665	59,498	62,473	66,222
	21,761	20,564	21,592	22,672	27,438
Profit/Loss for period	12,731	7,001	31,923	35,057	34,684
Balance Sheet Movements					
Mortgage payments	5,340	5,340	5,340	5,340	5,340
Interest Free Loan repayments	29,300	1,500	10,000	1,500	0
Surplus/Deficit for period	-21,909	161	16,583	28,217	29,344

Measuring Outcomes

We currently measure our outcomes in a number of ways, but we recognise that we could be better at analysing the valuable qualitative data we gather. This is something that we are actively seeking to address through funding we have received from the Local Sustainability Fund (2016-2017).

9.0 Critical Path Analysis

Below forms the basis for a more detailed critical path analysis.

- Feb 2016 – Full planning permission given
- May 2017 – Confirm tenders and agree principle contractor
- June-September 2017 – Begin crowdfunding campaign and begin to promote volunteer opportunities.
- September 2017 – Confirm funding is in place and instruct principle contractor. Set dates for volunteer / community courses
- October 2017 – Advertise courses
- March 2018 – Groundworks begin and car tyre foundations complete, access to services created
- May 2018 – Timber frame construction
- June – August 2018 – Straw bale construction, sewage system installed.
- August – September 2018 – External rendering
- September 2018 – roof erected and building water tight. Work on shingle roof to continue throughout the winter.
- October 2018 – windows installed , internal first fix – plumbing / electrics
- October 2018 – internal render to residential and social areas
- January 2019 – complete internal joinery / plastering
- February 2019 – Second fix, install fixtures and fittings.
- March 2019 – decoration, ground works on car park
- April 2019 – snagging
- May 2019 – open to the public