

# Lauriston Farm Ltd Social Farming Initiative

Community Share Offer  
February 26th to April 8th 2017





## Open Days

You can come and see and hear what we do and ask any questions you like every Saturday and Tuesday from February 28th 2017 to April 8th 2017

Each session will start at 10.30am and 2.30pm and last for a maximum of two hours.

It is essential that you book in for these as space is limited and you can do this on our website and Facebook page.

An application form to become a shareholder can be found at the back of this prospectus or on our website

[www.lauristonfarm.co.uk/shareoffer](http://www.lauristonfarm.co.uk/shareoffer)

Contact: Lauriston Farm Limited, Lauriston Farm, Goldhanger, Essex CM9 8AH, England

Email: [shareoffer@lauristonfarm.co.uk](mailto:shareoffer@lauristonfarm.co.uk) Tel: +44 (0)1621 788348

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Reg. 468



GB-ORG-06

## The Offer Summary

Lauriston Farm Limited is seeking membership and investment from the community in order to create a body of warmth and support around the business and to raise capital to begin implementing our agricultural and social strategy to secure the long term future of the organisation.

We are aiming to raise £35,000 through community investment (with a maximum subscription of £60,000) in order to deliver our business plan. We need to achieve a minimum of £20,000 in investment in order to deliver our business plan with some revisions.

The minimum shareholding is one hundred shares. Each share costs £1 so the minimum investment is £100 per shareholder. However, we fully recognise that this amount may be out of the reach of people on low incomes and so in certain circumstances we shall accept £50 for membership on special application as we don't want money to be a barrier. The maximum investment is £7,500 per shareholder. The offer opens on Sunday 26th February 2017 and runs for six weeks, closing on Saturday 8th April 2017, or when the maximum target is reached, whichever is sooner.

The Board reserve the right to extend the offer beyond this initial period if they believe doing so would benefit the share issue.

Our business plan can be downloaded from <http://www.lauristonfarm.co.uk/shareoffer>

*This offer is being promoted by Lauriston Farm Limited (of Lauriston Farm, Goldhanger, Maldon, Essex CM9 8AH) which is registered as a Charitable Community Benefit Society with the FCA (reg. no. 7481).*

## Greetings from Lauriston Farm



A very warm welcome to the forming of a brand new community owned business based at Lauriston Farm on the Blackwater Estuary in Goldhanger, Essex.

Over the last thirteen years I have built up the business at Lauriston Farm from scratch. At its core has always been the principle of supplying the catchment of the Blackwater with sensibly priced high quality food whilst enhancing the natural environment and its associated wildlife which for us includes honey bees.

We have also always been a socially orientated farm, welcoming over three hundred individual visits a year. From the start the business has had a social aspect with socially disadvantaged people, local schools and parents with children coming to experience the way we farm.

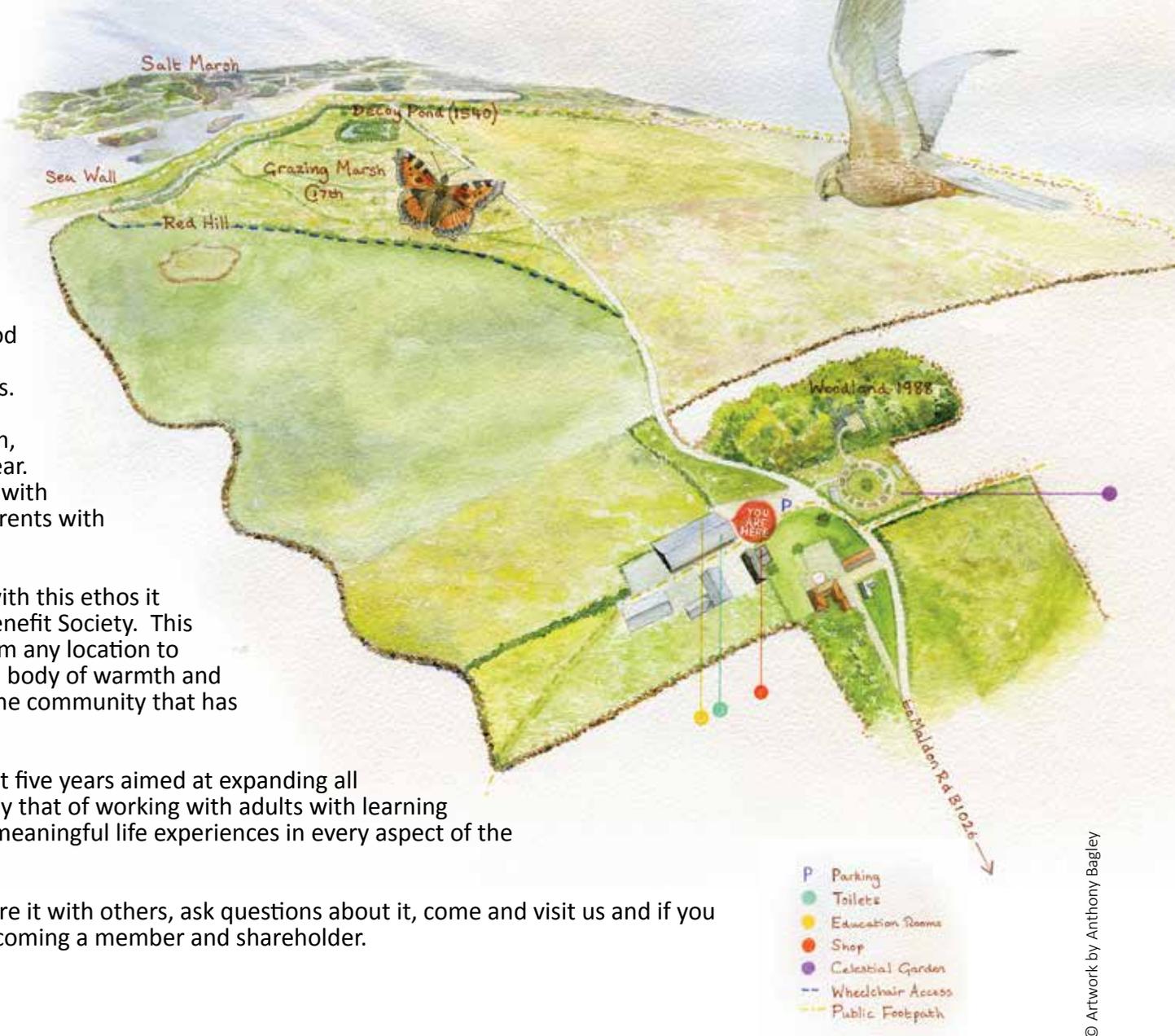
To take the business into the future and continue with this ethos it is natural for us to form a Charitable Community Benefit Society. This type of co-operative society enables individuals from any location to become members and shareholders. This creates a body of warmth and support around our work which is accountable to the community that has invested in it.

We have a solid business plan approved for the next five years aimed at expanding all aspects of the farm's current activities but especially that of working with adults with learning difficulties. We want to offer this group of people meaningful life experiences in every aspect of the Society's activities, every day of the working week.

So, I invite you to read through our prospectus, share it with others, ask questions about it, come and visit us and if you feel connected to our ethos and vision consider becoming a member and shareholder.

Happy Reading!

Spencer Christy – Farm Director and Founder



# Foundations of the Social Farming Initiative

## An Abundance of Life

Lauriston Farm sits on the Blackwater Estuary in Essex, England which is an internationally designated wetland under Ramsar.

Such sites, “are recognized as being of significant value not only for the country or the countries in which they are located, but for humanity as a whole” (ramsar.org, 2014).

The twice daily rising and falling of the tide in and out of the salt marsh brings with it an abundance of life peculiar to the estuarine environment.

Over winter, migrating birds in their thousands make the farm their home.

The six hundred year old sea meadow boasts plant life so rare it demands the highest level of UK conservation protection as Site of Special Scientific Interest. Indeed, over eighty percent of the farm holds this status.

Evidence of human settlement from Neolithic to Roman and Anglo Saxon times can be found.

## Recent Developments

Lauriston Farm has been wholly owned by Robert and Marion Christy since 1993. Until 2004 it was rented out until their son Spencer joined. He has developed the business from

scratch using rare breed cattle and sheep and the biodynamic farming method to enhance the diverse habitats and wildlife which includes honey bees. The farm was runner up in the 2013 Essex FWAG Conservation Awards.

## Biodynamic Agriculture

Founded by Dr Rudolf Steiner through a series of lectures in 1924, biodynamic agriculture views the farm as one self-supporting organism, producing as much feed and fertility as possible from within the farm. The standards cover all the basic organic requirements but there is a requirement to keep animals, especially cattle, on the farm.

In addition, there is a variety of mineral, plant and animal based substances that are prepared in individual methods. They are used to enhance decomposition, assist with soil life processes and to confirm healthy plant growth. Most of the ingredients for these preparations come from the farm and are made on the farm.

Supplementing this, the influence of planets and constellations are taken into consideration when undertaking all the basic tasks of agriculture. Farm animals are managed to allow them express their archetypal behaviour.

When all these aspects accompany common good agricultural practices the produce has a measurable, enhanced vitality. Lauriston Farm

achieved formal Demeter (biodynamic) certification in 2009 and has been supplying delicious high quality food to the locality since 2005.

## Camphill Communities

The research method used by Rudolf Steiner to develop biodynamics was applied to all aspects of life. This gave birth to Steiner (Waldorf) Schools, anthroposophic medicine, new forms of art and architecture, performing arts (eurythmy), curative education, philosophy and economics and much more.

In the United Kingdom the Camphill movement, initiated by Dr Karl Konig, draws from many aspects of this work providing residential communities for adults with learning difficulties. It was on a one week visit in 2010 to Botton Camphill Village in North Yorkshire that the inspiration for the social farming initiative at Lauriston was born.

The Camphill philosophy fully integrates adults with learning difficulties into all aspects of the community activities by working alongside co-workers. The activities typically include agriculture, horticulture, cookery and crafts all of which produce goods for sale and for use within the community. Therapeutic benefit is found through the meaningful work and the learning of new skills.



## Social Farming at Lauriston

Biodynamic farming recognises the importance of human involvement in the farm, creating an atmosphere that people of all ages are drawn to. This is evident at Lauriston where many people over the years have volunteered in a variety of capacities.

Since 2006 the farm has hosted students on two year work experience placements from the local comprehensive school. Since 2007, educational farm walks bring around three hundred people visits a year to the farm.

In 2012 this level of visitors drew funding from Natural England for wheelchair access to fields, woodland and gardens, a meeting room with kitchen, disabled toilets, classrooms and car parking space. This has enabled an even wider group of people to come and enjoy the farm.

In 2014 Lauriston hosted a large resocialisation project for the long term unemployed. The success of this project created a social farming team which today forms the basis of the current initiative.

## What's next?

We are ready to use our combined life skills, the facilities at Lauriston Farm and our experience of social farming to bring the Camphill ethos to the Blackwater Estuary.

We know that there is a demand for this from meetings and conversations with families, charities and other organisations involved with adults with learning difficulties in our catchment area.

We have already formed a Charitable Community Benefit Society (no. 7481) as the legal vessel to hold the initiative and we are selling community shares in this Society.

We have written a five year business plan with assistance from the Just Growth Programme, which has been approved in principle by lenders Co-Operative and Community Finance and the grant making Esmee Fairbairn Foundation.

We are now actively seeking the membership and the funding needed to bring this this vision into reality.

## How You Can Help

Have a good read through our prospectus, feel free to ask questions and even come and visit us if you have time! If you are in sympathy with our vision and plan, you can become a member and shareholder in our Society.

If you do this, as part of the Just Growth Programme, your share purchase will be matched by a loan and a grant, thus tripling your contribution.

Also, you can share this document with other people and organisations, friends and relatives and encourage them to consider share ownership.

You can also use your social media network to spread the word.



# Lauriston Farm Limited – Charitable Community Benefit Society (CCBS)

## Structure of the Society

There are three layers to a CCBS.

The Board of Trustees ensure the Society complies with its rules in a legal manner. Trustees generally do not receive a salary for their work. Our Board consists of a Chair, a Secretary, two Trustees and the Farm Director.

The Executive carries out all the day to day activities of the Society and can be paid a salary. Our Executive consists of the Farm Director, a livestock farmer, a farm co-worker, a social farming project manager, a craft co-worker and a housekeeper and cook.

Surrounding all this is a membership of shareholders of the Society. They will receive direct and indirect benefits from membership and can attend and vote at the AGM.

We also have a number of advisors covering accounts, business planning, land tenure and publicity.



Kai Lange, Christiane Mills, Spencer Christy, Marion Christy and Jane Corbey



Andy Stock, Eelco Visser, Christiane Mills, Jane Corbey, Sally Ure-Reid, Zoe Greening and Spencer Christy

## The Board of Trustees:

Christiane Mills - Chair  
Jane Corbey – Secretary  
Kai Lange – Trustee  
Marion Christy – Trustee  
Spencer Christy – Farm Director

## The Executive Team:

Spencer Christy – Farm Director  
Eelco Visser – Livestock Farmer  
Andy Stock – Farm Co-Worker  
Zoe Greening – Social Farming PM  
Sally Ure-Reid – Craft Co-Worker



## Our Aims

The Society's aims are wider than just the social farming initiative. They encompass all the conservation work carried out on the farm as well as the educational work we undertake.

However, the success of the social farming initiative will make the whole Society more financially resilient. It will also enable the Society to reduce the impact of any reductions in government farm support after Britain has left the EU. This is critical in ensuring the continuation of thirteen years of habitat creation and wildlife conservation on the farm.

So, when you become a shareholder you will also be supporting conservation work, including natural bee guardianship, wildlife and on farm education. This currently takes the form of workshops on biodynamics, educational farm walks and work experience. We have also written a business plan for setting up a Steiner Kindergarten on the farm which we hope to manifest in the near future.

These aims are wholly charitable in nature which enables us to apply for Charitable Exemptions for the CCBS. This will be very

helpful in future fundraising activity as we can receive gift aid on donations. It also allows us to apply for funding from foundations that only fund charities.

To help with the use of anthroposophical methods some of the team will need to have prior training or experience in these methods such as the current livestock farmer who undertook a Biodynamic apprenticeship.

## Creating a Body of Warmth

Some of us are shareholders in other Societies. It engenders a feeling of connectivity with the organisation and their work. Even if we never actually visit them, they are there in our consciousness and the good will this generates towards their aims is unmeasurable.

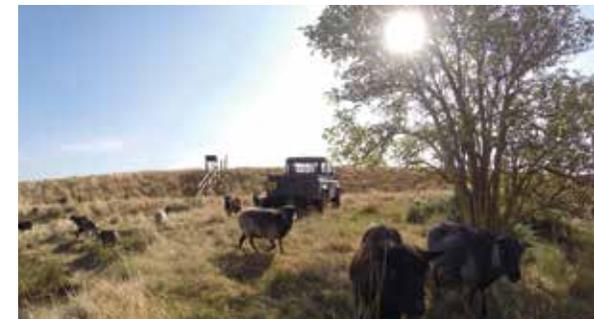
We refer to this as a 'body of warmth' around the Society. Within the shareholders there could be people very capable of assisting with the work we are undertaking or advising us. We hope it will lead to a closer relationship to the wider community not forgetting that our primary concern is that of the Society's aims.

## Trusting in the Future

The aims of the Society have been carried by sole trader status since 2004 and moving to a CCBS is a big step for us and one that is very rare in the agricultural sector. However, we take comfort from other very successful initiatives such as Tablehurst Farm and Plaw Hatch Farm in Sussex and Fordhall Farm in Shropshire.

The Society has signed a five year license with the landowners to ensure the project has stability. This has a three year review built-in, which will lay the foundation for the next five year agreement.

This development is the first step on the road of farm succession from one generation to the next. We hope that by creating a vibrant Society that the work that has been undertaken will continue and expand, way into the future.



# Lauriston Social Farming Initiative - what you'll be supporting

***By becoming a member you will support all our current core work of conservation friendly farming, natural beekeeping and on farm education as well as providing the funding for a brand new resource for adults with learning difficulties living in the local community and a development of associated activities.***

## Expansion of Agricultural Production

The two hundred or so rare breed North Ronaldsay Sheep will stay the same but the herd of Shetland cattle will grow from thirty to forty five animals.

A pair of rare breed Berkshire pigs will be introduced with the boar living in woodland and the sow living in a field planted with crops for her and her piglets to eat. We hope to have two litters a year which we aim to raise to Demeter standards.



Photo: Jane Bissett, Kennixton Flock Ixworth photo: RBST

Around twenty rare breed Ixworth hens with cockerels will arrive. They will live in the wood and produce Demeter certified eggs and chicken meat.



## Field Scale Vegetable Growing

The existing Celestial Garden with wheelchair access produces sufficient vegetables for the daily lunches. By growing an additional two acres of field scale vegetables to Demeter standards we will be able to sell the produce to the local community.

## Food Hygiene Regulation Compliant Kitchen

By building a new food hygiene regulation compliant kitchen facility next to the existing farm meeting room we can produce daily lunches for everybody on the farm. In addition, we can process the farms produce into jams, chutneys and other saleable items. The kitchen will aim to be certified by Demeter which means only organic produce will be used within it.

## Natural Bee Guardianship

The number of bee colonies living on the farm will be increased through swarming and more flowers will be grown for their feed.



## Crafts - Processing the Farm's Sheep's Wool

The sheep are sheared every year and this yields some two hundred kilograms of raw fleece. Once it has been washed and carded it can be woven on simple table top looms for a variety of goods including rugs, place mats and wall hangings. It can also be packed into bags for sale or spun into yarn using a spinning wheel. Some yarn is processed by machine in Cornwall and this can be knitted or woven. There is the desire to weave 'Lauriston Tweed', the design of which will reflect the natural environment of the farm.



## Expansion of Sales Activity

We will reach out further into the community with increased sales either through a local market or by opening a small farm shop on the premises.

## Life Experiences for Adults with Learning Difficulties

All these farm activities will form the basis for the creation of six full day placements per day for adults with mild to moderate learning difficulties working alongside the Society's staff in small groups, learning new skills whilst engaging in meaningful activities.

In return, each participant pays a fee for each day to the Society from their personalised care budgets either directly or through a partner

organisation. The farm will supply lunch each day as well as refreshments during breaks.

Lunches will involve all the Society's workers, volunteers and participants which we hope will engender a feeling of belonging to the farm community.

The therapeutic benefits to participants from such an arrangement have long been established by many research projects. The social atmosphere of the farm also benefits.

We have been advised to expect a lot of single day attendance to start with and then some settling down with people typically attending for up to three days a week. This regularity creates a feeling of familiarity and security for participants.



We will tailor each day to the individual abilities and interests of the participants but we envisage the following activities being undertaken:

- *livestock husbandry*  
daily checks, feeding, collecting eggs, cleaning houses, moving livestock
- *horticulture*  
bed preparation, seed sowing, transplanting, weeding, harvesting, composting
- *cookery*  
all aspects of the daily provision of nutritious cooked lunches, processing the farms produce into jams, chutneys and other goods for sale
- *crafts*  
washing fleeces, carding wool, weaving raw fleece, spinning yarn, weaving yarn, weaving braids, knitting, crocheting
- *sales*  
weighing, cleaning, labelling and packing the farms produce, helping at markets or in the farm shop

## Finances and Funding

The sole trading business has been operating profitably since 2004 and been successful in attracting high levels of funding from Natural England. We have developed a steady local market for sales of farm produce. In addition, educational activities and the occasional social farming project have provided useful top ups to the income. We are familiar with our costs of sales over this time and the overheads of the operation.

The existing fixed assets of the sole trading business will be sold to the Society in exchange for shares. The current livestock will remain in sole trader ownership and be rented for a peppercorn to the Society who will be responsible for all aspects of their management. The Society will own all new animals born from these sheep and cattle.

In order to grow the business, we will diversify our income streams and expand into social farming. The Society will then be less dependent on government agricultural funding, more financially resilient whilst keeping true to its objects.

There are various forms of funding we can apply for but we feel the Just Growth programme's combination of a community share offer matched by a loan and a grant has an integrity to it which aligns with our vision.

From Just Growth (FEA Network), we are attempting to reach a funding total of £75,000

in our first year of operating as a Charitable Community Benefit Society, which breaks down as follows:

- £20,000 - Grant from FEA Network (Funding Enlightened Agriculture)
- £20,000 - Loan from CCF (Co-operative and Community Finance)
- £35,000 – Community Investment

If we achieve this level of funding we will be able to apply for an additional £12,900 of capital funding through the LEADER project. This comes in the form of a capital grant from the EU agricultural budget via DEFRA in the UK. This brings the total funding for the project to £87,900.

Our net losses in the first year (see table opposite) are attributable to our 'start up' revenue and capital funding requirements – including building work, salaries for social farming project manager, cook and gardener and set up costs for the newly formed Lauriston Farm Charitable Community Benefit Society. This loss is mitigated in our first year through the £87,900 of funding we are in the process of securing.

We've looked at contingencies for start-up and future years and we're confident that our projections are realistic and reliable. Full details are available in our business plan which can be downloaded from <http://www.lauristonfarm.co.uk/shareoffer>

Our environmental, social and educational aims are a good fit with the mission of a number of foundations and grant awarding bodies. The Society's charitable status assists with funding as well as enabling the recovery of gift aid from donations for future projects.

Lauriston Farm will generate income from

- Conservation work
- Sales of farm produce
- Social farming placements
- Educational programmes

Our new Social Farming Initiative, established conservation work, produce sales and educational programmes are four income streams with good potential. They support each other through cross subsidisation and enable less dependence on agricultural funding from government.

Our positive projections of filling all thirty social farming places within one year are based on local market research which identified a demand for such an initiative. Similarly, our projections for the growth of farm produce by 40% over five years are equally confident based on our experience to date, a loyal customer base and an increasing interest in local artisan food, high animal welfare standards, chemical free food and food free from any genetically modified feed or seed.

## Five Year Headline Forecasts

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
<b>Total Income</b>	£85,693	£134,416	£142,455	£149,099	£156,942
<b>Total costs &amp; overheads</b>	£127,038	£123,010	£131,521	£138,371	£143,220
<b>Profit/loss</b>	-£41,345	£11,406	£10,934	£10,728	£13,721

Note: Our net losses in our first year of operating as a CCBS are entirely mitigated by funding from the £87,900 we are seeking to raise through this share offer and match funding. A more detailed five year forecast is available in our business plan which can be downloaded from our website: <http://www.lauristonfarm.co.uk/shareoffer>

### Where the investment is needed

Our funding target of £87,900 will be split between revenue costs and capital costs in the first year of trading as a Charitable Community Benefit Society.

Our start-up costs for salaries include two days a week for one year for the Social Farming Project Manager, five days per week for four months for the Society's cook/nutritionist, one day per week for four months for the craft co-worker and two days per week for six months for the farm co-worker.

Our start-up costs for revenue items include insurance, DBS checks, risk assessments, professional fees and software. In addition, the costs of running the share offer will have to be borne which includes commission to Crowdfunder UK, production of documentation, other marketing and advertising costs such as travel for meetings and advertorials in magazines.

Our start-up capital costs for horticultural activity include a large poly tunnel for vegetable production, hand tools and tractor mounted

implements for field scale vegetable cropping and a small cold store.

For the general running of the initiative there is the need to build a new room split into two. One room will be used as a boot room and changing room and will be linked to the existing disabled toilets. The other room will form the shell of the new food hygiene certified kitchen and will link to the existing meeting room.

The farm's location requires the Society to help with transport so we intend to lease hire a nine seat people carrier to transport social farming participants to and from the farm.

The office will require telephone and internet connections and a new pc with printer, copier and scanner.

For the agricultural expansion, fencing, pig arks, chicken houses and drinkers are needed. To increase the efficiency of all the agricultural operations a second hand tractor with arms for a bucket and other implements will be purchased. This will reduce the reliance on contractors and enable more time to be spent on social farming activities.



Meeting room

## Who's Behind the Initiative?

On Tuesday January 24th 2017 eleven people gathered to hold the inaugural Board Meeting of Lauriston Farm Limited CCBS.

Around the table sat the landowners, **Robert and Marion Christy**. Now both retired, they are not farmers but purchased the farm in 1993 to protect it by increasing the SSSI designation from thirty acres to over one hundred and forty. Marion is a Director of the CCBS and an attendee at the Maldon Quaker Meeting.

Chair of the Board, **Christiane Mills**, has been volunteering at the farm for over three years. Born in Paris, as a teacher she moved to England after marrying and to Essex in 1984. She is an experienced Reiki therapist, runs self-development workshops and is an active member of the Colchester anthroposophical study group.

The Board's secretary is **Jane Corbey**. Born in Swansea, Jane arrived in Essex in 1988. She worked in the history department of Essex University and has been volunteering on the farm, working on the administration, for over four years. She is a keen nature lover and gardener and applies the biodynamic methods.

**Kai Lange** is a Director on the CCBS Board. Born in Germany, Kai has over thirty years of experience in biodynamics. He has worked at Oaklands Camphill Community and Ruskin Mill and is currently course-leader at the Biodynamic Agricultural College.

**Spencer Christy**, born in Maldon, Essex, built the farm business at Lauriston beginning in 2004. In the CCBS he has the role of Farm Director, sitting on the Board and being a member of the Executive Team. Spencer is an active member of the Anthroposophical Society, a trustee with the Biodynamic Association and an attendee at the Maldon Quaker Meeting.

Coming from the Netherlands, **Eelco Visser** is the livestock farmer in the CCBS and runs the farm's Facebook page. He studied film making and produced many natural swimming pools before undertaking the two year Biodynamic Apprenticeship Training at Tablehurst Farm. He joined Lauriston in 2016 and oversees all the animals and general farm work.

The project manager for the Social Farming Initiative is **Zoe Greening**. Born in Hertfordshire and growing up on the continent, Zoe has twenty years work experience in social work and has been volunteering on the farm for over five years. She moved to Essex in 2007, has volunteered at Camphill Communities in Germany and is currently a member of the Religious Society of Friends at the Maldon Meeting.

The craft coordinator in the CCBS is **Sally Ure Reid**. Sally grew up in Forest Row, Sussex and was inspired by the Steiner Architecture, flow forms, biodynamic food and agriculture. She is a designer who has run her own business and has been involved with

Lauriston for two and a half years initially bringing the DWP project to the farm in 2014.

With a degree in Conservation Management from Writtle College, **Andy Stock** first engaged with the farm in 2015. Born in Chelmsford and growing up in Goldhanger he now helps out in the Celestial Garden and with conservation work as a farm co-worker. He is a keen bird watcher, song writer and guitarist.

**Emily Walter** has seventeen years of editorial and design experience and is helping with the publicity material needed for the share offer and business plan. She is a fine art graduate and has been involved with Lauriston since 2014.

**Lizzy Conder** is the accountant for the CCBS. She is a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of England and Wales, a Chartered Tax Adviser and currently works as Deputy Finance Director for the University of London. Lizzy is a keen folk dancer and first visited Lauriston in 2014 when she fell in love with the sheep.

For more details, including our team of volunteers, see our business plan at: <http://www.lauristonfarm.co.uk/shareoffer>



## What are Community Shares?

Lauriston Farm Limited, trading as Lauriston Farm, is using a form of investment called community shares (also called ‘withdrawable shares’) which are ideally suited to community-focused organisations like Lauriston Farm. Our community shares will give each investor a social and environmental dividend.

Community shares can’t be sold on or transferred. Shareholders will not immediately receive interest on the shares they buy. They may withdraw their shareholding (in essence, get their money back) but only under certain conditions decided by the Board. Such decisions about offering interest and withdrawals will first be made after five years and reviewed annually. If withdrawals are possible, shareholders will have to give three months’ notice in writing to withdraw.

In making these decisions, the Board will always have to ensure that getting money back to shareholders is prudent, taking into account our objectives as a Charitable Community Benefit Society. So, whilst we have a strong business plan that supports our plans for growth, and a desire to ensure a return to shareholders who have shown faith in our Society, our wider community purpose will always come first.

So, as shareholder it is important you share our values over and above a desire to receive an immediate return.

## What will investors get?

Every shareholder will be a member and co-owner of Lauriston Farm Limited and will get a stake in key decision making such as deciding who is on the Board and on resolutions at our AGM.

You can find more information on voting in our society rules which are available to download from our website:  
<http://www.lauristonfarm.co.uk/shareoffer>

Under the law governing Charitable Community Benefit Societies, regardless of how many shares you own, everyone has one vote. This fits our desire to have a democratic organisation as all investors will be equal.



## The Hedge Pledge!

“For every one pound you invest we will plant one centimetre of mixed native hedging suited to human foraging and wildlife habitat.”

- an investment of £100 will plant one metre of hedging which incorporates six plants
- an investment of £500 plants five metres of hedging with thirty plants
- the total funding sought of £35,000 plants three hundred and fifty metres of hedging with an incredible two thousand, one hundred plants!



## Other direct and indirect benefits

Turn to page sixteen for a description of other direct and indirect benefits of becoming a shareholder.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### What happens if the offer fails to raise sufficient funds?

In order to deliver our business plan without significant revisions, we need to reach the share offer funding target of £35,000. If this target is not reached we will not draw down any investment. We will review our business plan based on the funds we have raised. If we are able to produce a viable new business plan we will contact investors to establish if they want to invest in it.

### Why would we stop at £60,000 if there was an appetite for people to invest more?

At the moment, we cannot realistically deliver a larger project than this maximum level of investment allows. To accept further investment, a new business plan would need to be written and potential investors contacted to see if they wish to invest in it. We have written a business plan for a Steiner Kindergarten on the farm and it is likely this plan would be the one to develop.

### What if the Society becomes insolvent?

In the event of insolvency, our assets would

be sold and the proceeds will firstly pay off any creditors. After that, investors will get back all or a proportion of their money. The level of repayment will depend on the amount of assets owned by the Society. These are initially quite low but will grow over time. Regardless of the level of assets, you won't be liable for any more money.

A Charitable Community Benefit Society is exempt from the regulations governing public share offers so there is no right to compensation from the Financial Services Compensation Scheme, or recourse to an ombudsman.

Finally, the Society's asset lock kicks in and any surplus assets will be transferred to the Natural Beekeeping Trust (registered Charity Number 1140009) whom we have had a very close working relationship since it was formed in 2009. They aim to promote awareness of sustainable beekeeping which is determined by their understanding of the essential needs of the bee. The founders of the Trust believe that encouraging bee guardianship as well as fostering an interest in organic and biodynamic agriculture and gardening will make a major contribution to ensuring the long term health of the honeybee.

### What happens if the land owner decides to sell the land?

This is very unlikely but should it occur Lauriston Farm Limited will have first opportunity to buy the land. It is one reason we chose the Charitable Community Benefit Society as it is the perfect vehicle for acting as a land trust. If we were unable to raise the funds to buy the land then we would enter into conversations with other land trusts, such as the Biodynamic Land Trust and work with them to buy the land. Robert and Marion Christy have been incredibly supportive of the development of the farm and are very keen to see it develop according to the business plan and eventually be placed in Trust.

### Who can buy the shares?

The offer is open to anyone over the age of sixteen.

Companies and other corporate bodies can become legal members of the Society though they will have to nominate a nominee when they make their application. Clubs and other incorporated groups (such as a group of friends or a family) can also buy shares but whoever buys them will be the legal owner. They will need to make



their own arrangements for how things like votes will be cast on their behalf and how any withdrawal payments will be repaid to everyone who contributed in the first instance.

### **What's the minimum investment?**

Our ideal minimum investment is £100. It is what we have built our business plan around and represents an investment in a community business and not a donation to a good cause. It also carries costs of processing and further costs every year for the Society such as notification of the AGM, sending out of annual accounts, the quarterly newsletter and other administration. So we can't set the bar too low or else it'll end up costing us more than we receive.

### **What if £100 is too much for us?**

Whilst £100 is our ideal minimum shareholder investment, we do not want your ability to pay to preclude you from becoming a member. Therefore, as a Board we have agreed to offer a concessionary membership rate of £50 to individuals on low incomes or some form of benefit. Alternatively, individuals can club together as friends or as a family and buy shares

collectively as described in the 'Who can buy shares?' section.

Finally, if the concessionary rate is still too high we do accept donations and these do count as community finance for the matched funding as part of the Just Growth Program. Our Charitable status allows us to recover the Gift Aid on your donation providing you are a UK taxpayer and forms for this are on page 22.

### **Is there a maximum I can invest?**

The maximum investment is £7,500.

### **Do I need to buy blocks of £100?**

No, each share is priced at £1 and once you have purchased the minimum amount then you can buy any amount so long as it is in whole pounds up to a maximum £7,500.

### **Can I buy shares as a gift?**

Yes, but get in touch with us, rather than using the application form. When shares are bought, there's a legal contract between the investor and Lauriston Farm Limited. We need to make special arrangements to ensure that the person who is having shares

bought for them is still able to personally agree to that contract.

### **When can I Buy Shares?**

The share offer opens on Sunday 26th February 2017 and closes on Saturday 8th April 2017.

### **Can I join the Board?**

Yes, in the future when a space becomes available. In order to join you will need to be a shareholder and be voted on at an AGM.

The Board can also co-opt a member for a specific task or for a specific need for a limited period of time without the need for an AGM vote.

You can also become an advisor to the Board if you have a particular skill we are looking for.

### **Any more questions?**

If you still have unanswered questions why not come on a farm open day. Alternatively, please contact us via email with your question and we will answer it promptly. Please use the following email address: [shareoffer@lauristonfarm.co.uk](mailto:shareoffer@lauristonfarm.co.uk)

## Direct and Indirect Benefits of Membership

### The indirect benefits of membership are:

- Environmental - wildlife conservation through biodynamic farming
- Social - life experiences for adults with learning difficulties through Camphill model
- Educational – farm based learning for the wider community using Waldorf methods

### The direct benefits of membership are:

- Feeling connected to a project producing the above benefits
- Taking an active part in decision making at AGMs
- Receiving a quarterly newsletter
- Invitations to events for members at the farm and beyond
- The opportunity to volunteer for the Society
- Being first in-line to enjoy our farm produce

### Don't forget the hedge pledge!

**“For every one pound share you invest in we will plant one centimetre of mixed native hedging suited to human foraging and wildlife habitat.”**

## What's next?

### Watch our Share Offer Video

This little film gives a livelier and more personal feel to the share offer and can be found on our website, facebook page and on You Tube.

### Contact Us

If you have any questions, just drop us a line by email, telephone or post and we will respond as quickly as we can to you.

### Open Days

You can come and visit us to see and hear for yourself what we do and ask any questions you like every Saturday and Tuesday from February 28th 2017 to April 8th 2017.

Each session will start at 10.30am and 2.30pm and last for a maximum of two hours.

It is essential that you book in for these as space is limited and you can do this on our website and on our Facebook page.

### Our Website

You can download and read our five year business plan and the Society's rules and find out more about what we do.

### Becoming a Member

All the information you need about buying shares to become a member is shown on the next page as well as our website. Don't forget that you can buy shares for friends and family members but each shareholder needs to complete a separate form.

### Getting Involved

You can really help us by spreading the word about our community share offer. Tell your friends, family, work colleagues and other organisations about our plans.

You can request a prospectus to be sent to someone by contacting us with their details.

Invite us to give a talk about our Charitable Community Benefit Society to a group you belong to. Over the years we've given many talks about the farm to organisations like the WI, U3A, gardening clubs, beekeeping groups, the Rotary Club, environmental organisations, schools, colleges, charities and horticultural societies.

Share all this, especially the video, on social media – we are on facebook, twitter and Instagram. Details are on the back cover.

# How to Become a Shareholder

## Online via Crowdfunder

We're running our share offer via Crowdfunder.co.uk an online platform which specialises in community share offers.

Crowdfunder uses Stripe to process payments with credit cards and debit cards.

Crowdfunder take 5% commission and Stripe take a 1.4% transaction fee on every transaction. This means for every £100 invested via Crowdfunder there is a total transaction fee of £6.40 which Lauriston Farm absorbs.

In order to use this service, you need a valid email address to create your Crowdfunder account and a UK debit or credit card. Once you've decided how much you want to invest, enter your card details into their secure service when prompted and Stripe takes care of the rest.

## Directly to Lauriston Farm Limited

You can also apply directly to Lauriston Farm Limited by removing and completing one of forms on pages 19 to 21 and posting it to:

Lauriston Farm Limited,  
Lauriston Farm,  
Goldhanger,  
Maldon,  
Essex CM9 8AH

One form is required for each individual member.

You can also download the form from our website:

[www.lauristonfarm.co.uk/shareoffer](http://www.lauristonfarm.co.uk/shareoffer)

and email it to us at:

[shareoffer@lauristonfarm.co.uk](mailto:shareoffer@lauristonfarm.co.uk)

Either way, you can pay by electronic bank transfer (BACS) or by cheque. Please make cheques payable to Lauriston Farm Limited.

Alternatively you can visit us and fill the form in on the farm paying by BACS, cheque or good old fashioned cash!

You will receive a receipt after your direct transaction with the farm.

Remember, we do not access any funds until the share offer is over and we have contacted you with confirmation of our situation.



## Organisations we work with



The Natural Beekeeping Trust  
[www.naturalbeekeepingtrust.org](http://www.naturalbeekeepingtrust.org)



BDA Certification  
[bdcertification.org.uk](http://bdcertification.org.uk)

North Ronaldsay Sheep Fellowship  
[Nrsf.moonfruit.com](http://Nrsf.moonfruit.com)

Seed Co-Operative  
[www.seedcooperative.org.uk](http://www.seedcooperative.org.uk)

Rare Breeds Survival Trust  
[www.rbst.org.uk](http://www.rbst.org.uk)

Essex County Council  
[www.essex.gov.uk](http://www.essex.gov.uk)

**Biodynamic  
Association**  
vital soil, vital food

Biodynamic Association  
[www.biodynamic.org.uk](http://www.biodynamic.org.uk)



Funding Enlightened Agriculture  
[www.feainetwork.org](http://www.feainetwork.org)



**The Biodynamic Land Trust**  
Securing farmland, conserving a living, working countryside

Biodynamic Land Trust [www.Biodynamiclandtrust.org.uk](http://www.Biodynamiclandtrust.org.uk)

The Essex Wildlife Trust  
[www.essexwt.org.uk](http://www.essexwt.org.uk)

Natural England  
[www.gov.uk/government/organisations/natural-england](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/natural-england)

Maldon District Council  
[www.maldon.gov.uk](http://www.maldon.gov.uk)

Shetland Cattle Herd Book Society  
[www.schbs.co.uk](http://www.schbs.co.uk)



## Notes

## Application to become a Shareholder in Lauriston Farm Limited

Name.....

Address.....

.....Postcode.....

Email.....

Phone.....

I wish to become a member of Lauriston Farm Limited in accordance with the rules & apply for £1 shares to the value of:

£50 Concession  £100  £150  £350  £1,000  Other £.....

(Minimum of £100, maximum of £7,500, concessionary rate of £50)

*If the share offer is oversubscribed and/or unable to offer you any or all the shares you have applied for, we will refund the difference by cheque to the address above unless we are notified otherwise.*

**Please tick the boxes below to indicate that you agree with the statements:**

- I confirm that I am 16 years old or older
- I have read the share offer document and understood and accept the terms of the share offer and the Rules of Lauriston Farm Limited
- I consent to using the email address above as the primary means of communication for official documents from Lauriston Farm Limited

Signed.....Date...../...../.....

The offer closes 8th April 2017 or whenever £60,000 is subscribed, whichever is soonest. The Board reserve the right to extend this offer.

Please enclose a cheque for payment made out to "Lauriston Farm Limited" and return the completed application form to; **Lauriston Farm Limited, Lauriston Farm, Goldhanger, Essex CM9 8AH or submit payment to bank account number 00100104 sort code 16-58-10**

Lauriston Farm Limited will store securely the information you have provided and will not share that information with anyone else without your permission.

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## Gift Aid Form For Donations

If you are considering a donation and are a UK tax payer we can claim 25% extra to the donation back from HMRC, thus increasing the value of your gift. Please use the form below or download from our website.

Title.....First Name.....Surname:.....

Address.....

.....

.....

Postcode.....

Email.....

Signed.....

Date...../...../.....

For all donations please make your cheque payable to “Lauriston Farm Limited” and write your name and telephone number on the back OR pay directly into bank account number 00100104 sort code 16-58-10 and return the completed application form to;  
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# From Salt Marsh to Sea Meadow

## History of Field

Work first began on the sea wall you are standing on some five hundred years ago, progress was slow and it wasn't until the mid 1600's that the sea defence was sufficient to start the gradual natural drainage of inland fields. As the salt water leaves the soil, the plants adapt to more freshwater conditions and the field retains the undulating profile of the salt marsh giving it the romantic name of a 'Sea Meadow'. By the seventeenth century this field was sufficiently dry to excavate the Gore Decoy Pond in front of you, which was worked until the mid nineteenth century, catching migrating ducks.

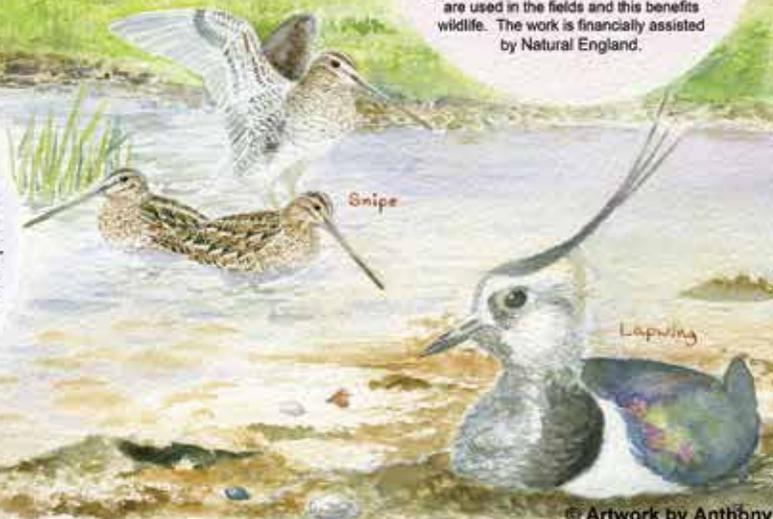


## Habitat Management

This field is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) as is this whole peninsular and salt marsh behind you. To maintain the rare plant species found in this field we graze with both rare breed sheep and cattle at a low density and ensure the water levels in the field rise and fall annually. In addition, the whole peninsular is certified biodynamic organic so no chemicals are used in the fields and this benefits wildlife. The work is financially assisted by Natural England.

## Target Species

The field provides excellent habitat for ground nesting birds such as Snipe, Lapwing, Redshank and Curlew. It also suits Marsh Harriers, Reed Warblers and various duck species. In addition, many insects and mammal species make the field their home and the borrow dyke supports water vole. All these species and the various rare plant species are listed in the designation document for the Blackwater Estuary SSSI.





Printed on recycled paper

Lauriston Farm Limited, Lauriston Farm, Goldhanger, Essex CM9 8AH, England

Email: [shareoffer@lauristonfarm.co.uk](mailto:shareoffer@lauristonfarm.co.uk) Tel: +44 (0)1621 788348

website: [www.lauristonfarm.co.uk](http://www.lauristonfarm.co.uk)

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