

Care Farming in the UK and Ireland: Annual Survey 2016/17



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Key Findings

- There are approximately 250 care farms currently operating in the UK and a further 35 in the Republic of Ireland. There are also over 100 prospective care farms¹ in various stages of development, which represents a marked increase in the last 18 months².
- There are more than 200 care farms in England and 60 prospective care farms; Wales has 8 care farms with around 3 prospectives; there are approximately 20 care farms in Scotland and 12 prospectives; Northern Ireland has 15 care farms with around 15 prospective care farms and there are approximately 35 social farms in the Republic of Ireland with 35 prospectives.
- Most care farms (and prospective care farms) are either commercial farm businesses, charities, Community Interest Companies (CICs) (all at 24%), or charitable companies limited by guarantee (22%).
- Approximately half of care farmers (49%) are owner occupiers, 29% rent their site, 21% are part of an existing agricultural enterprise and 14% of care farms have been given the land that they use at no charge.
- Currently there are 23 care farms that have demonstrated that they meet the care farming Code of Practice standards and another 50 or so working towards the Code.
- The average operating capacity level of UK care farms is currently at 65%.
- The number of clients attending a care farm per week varies from farm to farm but the average number of clients attending per week is 35.
- Most Care Farms in the UK provide services for a range of client groups, including people with learning difficulties (93% of care farms), autism spectrum disorders (86%), adults with mental ill-health (70%), people with physical disabilities (53%) and young people excluded from school or with behavioural issues (50%).
- Care farms typically provide services for several different client groups simultaneously (where appropriate) – on average, 5 different client groups.
- Most service users (88%) attend care farms between 1 and 3 times a week; most care farming sessions last for a day (typically between 10am and 3pm). The average cost of a care farming session is £52. Four percent of care farms also provide residential care.
- Care farms receive clients from a variety of referral routes but most commonly via Local Authority social services (86%), via a client's family or carer (66%), through personalised budgets (56%) and Community Mental Health Teams (56%)

¹ Prospective care farms are those farms in the very early planning stages or those being very close to opening for business.

² An increase from an estimated 55-60 prospectives in 2015.

1. Introduction

1.1. What is care farming and who is it for?

1.1.1. What is care farming?

- Care farming³ is the therapeutic use of farming practices⁴.
- On care farms, components of either the whole or part of the farm are used to provide health, social or educational care through a supervised, structured programme of farming-related activities.
- All care farms offer some elements of *farming* (involving crops, horticulture, livestock husbandry, use of machinery or woodland management etc.); but there is much variety across care farms in terms of the context, the client group and the type of farm⁵.
- Many care farms offer therapeutic contact with farm livestock, some provide specific animal assisted therapies and others also offer social and therapeutic horticulture and environmental conservation activities.

1.1.2. Who is care farming for?

Care farms provide services for a wide range of people, including those with defined medical or social needs (e.g. psychiatric patients, those experiencing from mild to moderate depression, people with learning disabilities, people with ASDs, those with dementia, those with a drug history, disaffected young people or elderly people) as well as those experiencing the effects of work-related stress or ill-health⁶.

1.2. Care farming is a type of ‘Green Care’

The nature, health and wellbeing sector provides an increasing number of nature-based interventions, comprising both i) **nature-based health promotion services** - providing informal opportunities for people to engage with nature in their community (e.g. community gardening or conservation volunteering) and ii) **green care services** for individuals with a defined health need offering structured therapy, rehabilitation or care, using contexts such as conservation or horticultural therapy projects and care farms.

Green care is defined as: *“nature-based therapy or treatment interventions - specifically designed, structured and facilitated for individuals with a defined need”*.

Green care interventions take place in different natural contexts and so involve various landscape types, all of which allow slightly different approaches. This results in a wide range of interventions which enables the choice of the most appropriate treatment option for a specific individual as ‘bespoke’ care. Green care initiatives usually consist of a facilitated, regular and specific intervention, for a particular individual (or group of service users), rather than simply a ‘natural’ experience for the general public⁷.

³ also called social farming or green care farming

⁴ Hassink, 2003; Haubenhofner et al., 2010; Care Farming UK, 2017

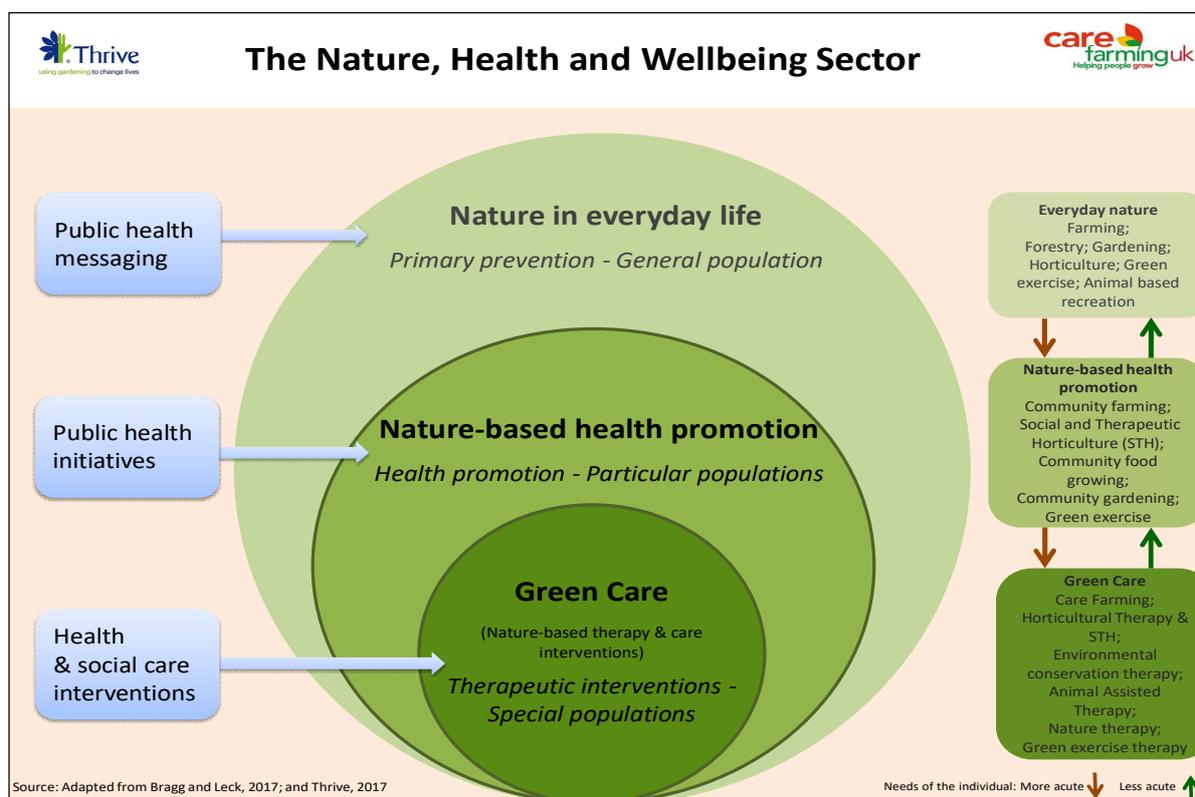
⁵ Relf, 2006; Hine et al., 2008a; Sempik et al., 2010; Bragg, 2013

⁶ Hine et al., 2008a; Pederson et al., 2011; Iancu et al., 2013; Bragg, 2013

⁷ Sempik et al 2010; Sempik and Bragg, 2013; Bragg and Atkins, 2016

Care farming is a type of green care⁸ - as highlighted in Figure 1.

Figure 1 – Care farming - a form of ‘Green care’ within the nature, health and wellbeing sector.



1.3. The role of Care Farming UK

Care Farming UK is a professional charitable company accountable to its members, and is led by care farmers and care farming supporters. Care Farming UK has two main roles: i) Promoting care farming; and ii) Supporting care farmers; with two strategic aims for each role:

Promoting care farming:

- To increase the profile and awareness of care farming
- To develop the evidence-base for the effectiveness of care farming

Supporting care farmers

- To support the quality and provision of services from care farms
- To enable care farming networks to develop across the UK

More information on the work of Care Farming UK, is available on the [Care Farming UK](https://www.carefarminguk.org/) website, alongside details of care farms, country and regional networks, and together with other resources and research publications.

Care Farming UK provides supporting services to individual care farmers all over the UK but also works to support regional and national networks of care farmers. We have strong links with Care Farming Scotland, which is a registered charity that aims to offer guidance, information and support to care farmers and to promote the development of care farming across Scotland. More

⁸ See Bragg and Atkins, 2016

information can be found at the Care Farming Scotland [website](#). Although there is not currently a Welsh care farming network, Care Farming UK is proactively seeking to offer support for development of such a group and with a care farmer from Wales on the Board of Trustees, it is hoped that this will progress in the future. Indeed, The Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens and Care Farming UK are working collaboratively on a new project in Wales called 'Tyfu Fyny'. Tyfu Fyny has been created to strengthen the community growing sector in Wales. The project, open to all existing and emerging community growing projects in Wales, has been funded by Welsh Government Rural Communities – Rural Development Plan 2014-2020. Tyfu Fyny supports all types of community growing projects in Wales, from community gardens to care farms to street planting projects.

Care Farming UK also works closely with the Social Farming Ireland team in the Republic of Ireland and in Northern Ireland who provide help, advice and supporting services to care farmers in Ireland through two support offices. More information about care farming in Ireland can be found at the Social Farming Ireland [website](#) and in Appendix A.

1.4. Care farming – quality assurance

Care farming represents a quality service provision for service users and commissioners and Care Farming UK has recognised the importance of maintaining high standards of practice on care farms and to this end has developed the care farming Code of Practice. The care farming Code of practice is essentially a set of minimum standards which Care Farming UK is encouraging all care farmers to adopt. The Code was developed by a team of care farmers and other specialists and trialled by a range of care farming practitioners before being made available to all care farmers⁹. The quality of services delivered by care farmers is assured through a process of self-assessment, enabling care farms to demonstrate that they follow the Care Farming Code of Practice. The care farming Code has been well received by commissioners and care farmers alike. For more information on the care farming Code of Practice see <https://www.carefarminguk.org/about-us/care-farming-code-practice>

1.5. Care farming in the UK – the need for an annual survey

To make data on the scale of the care farming sector available to commissioners, clients, policy makers and other interested parties, Care Farming UK has recognised the need to collate evidence on many aspects of care farming (such as the number of farms, types of clients currently using care farms, governance and charges). We have therefore committed to compile an annual report of the care farming sector, to publish this on its website, and communicate its availability as widely as possible to commissioners and public health officials (see The State of Play 2015¹⁰ and this annual survey 2016/17). More details on how the need for an annual survey was identified and of past surveys can be found in Appendix B.

1.6. Methodology

Online Survey

A questionnaire was developed using Survey Monkey and the link to the survey was circulated to all care farmers on the Care Farming UK database; via email, Twitter and Facebook, in February 2017. Responses from the online survey for each farm were then transferred onto the Care Farming UK database by Care Farming UK staff.

⁹ To access the Code, care farms must be members of Care Farming UK

¹⁰ Available at:

<https://www.carefarminguk.org/sites/carefarminguk.org/files/web%20admin/Care%20farming%20in%20UK%20and%20Ireland%20-%20State%20of%20Play%202015%20-%20CFUK%20Final%20February%202016%202.pdf>

Information from Northern Ireland, Republic of Ireland, Scotland and Wales

Updated information on the numbers of care farms in Ireland (R.o.I. and Northern Ireland) were provided by the Social Farming Ireland support offices. Information on Scottish care farms came from Care Farming Scotland and Care Farming UK database. Information on Welsh care farms originated from the Care Farming UK database.

2 Care farming: Annual Survey 2016/17

2.1 Total number of care farms

2.1.1 Number of care farms in the UK

- There are approximately 250 care farms currently operating in the UK and a further 35 in the Republic of Ireland. There are also over 100 prospective care farms¹¹ in various stages of development, which represents a marked increase in the last 18 months¹².

2.1.2 Regional and country representation

- Care farms from all the regions of the UK and Republic of Ireland completed the online survey. The majority of these responses were from South East England (18%), South West England (17%), Eastern England (15%) and West Midlands (13%), followed by North Yorkshire and Humberside (9%). These responses correspond to the areas where currently there are the most care farms present. Full results shown in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1 Regional and country representation

Country	Region	Percentage of care farms responding to survey
England	Eastern England	15%
	East Midlands	5%
	London	2%
	North East England	5%
	North West England	5%
	South East England	18%
	South West England	17%
	West Midlands	13%
	Yorkshire and Humberside	9%
	Total	89%
Scotland		5%
Wales		1%
Northern Ireland		4%
Republic of Ireland		1%

- The regional distribution of care farms across the UK can be seen via the Care Farming UK website at: <http://www.carefarminguk.org/map> and a searchable list of Care farming UK member farms can be found at: <https://www.carefarminguk.org/map/search>.

2.1.3. Breakdown of figures per country

England

There are more than 200 care farms in England with around 60 prospective care farms. More details about the care farms in England and their regional distribution can be found on the Care Farming UK [website](#)

¹¹ Prospective care farms are those farms in the very early planning stages or being very close to opening for business.

¹² An increase from an estimated 55-60 prospectives in 2015.

Wales

There are approximately 8 care farms in Wales with around 3 prospective care farms. More details about the care farms in Wales and their regional distribution can be found on the Care Farming UK [website](#)

Scotland

There are approximately 20 care farms in Scotland with around 12 prospective care farms from Ullapool in the north to Dumfries in the south, offering care farming services to various client groups¹³. More details about the care farms in Scotland and their regional distribution can be found on the Care Farming UK [website](#) and a list of care farms in Scotland can also be found via Care Farming Scotland: <https://www.carefarmingscotland.org.uk/what-is-care-farming/care-farms-in-scotland/>

Northern Ireland

There are approximately 15 care farms in Northern Ireland with around 15 prospective care farms. More details about the care farms in Northern Ireland and their regional distribution can be found on the Care Farming UK [website](#) and a list of care farms in Northern Ireland can be found via Social Farming Support Service and Rural Support: <http://www.ruralsupport.org.uk/social-farming-northern-ireland/find-a-social-farm/>

Republic of Ireland

There are approximately 35 social farms in the Republic of Ireland with around 35 prospective care farms. More details about the care farms in the Republic of Ireland and their regional distribution can be found via Social Farming Ireland and Leitrim Development Company at: <http://www.socialfarmingcrossborders.org/>

Further information about the development of social farming in Ireland (North and South) can also be found in Appendix A. Further details about regional responses to the survey are given in Appendix C.

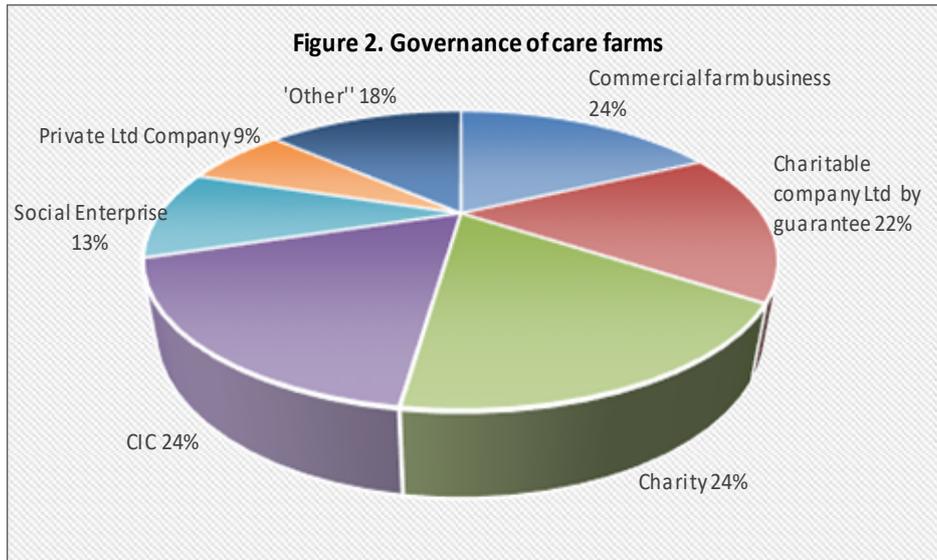
2.2. About the Care Farms

2.2.1. Organisational governance

- Most care farms (and prospective care farms) are either commercial farm businesses, charities, Community Interest Companies (CICs) (all at 24%), or charitable companies limited by guarantee (22%). 13% have been set up as Social Enterprises (SE), 9% are private limited companies¹⁴ and 18% had other organisational arrangements such as sole traders, community groups, therapeutic communities, independent provident societies, partnerships of not-for-profit organisations or education centres (See Figure 2).

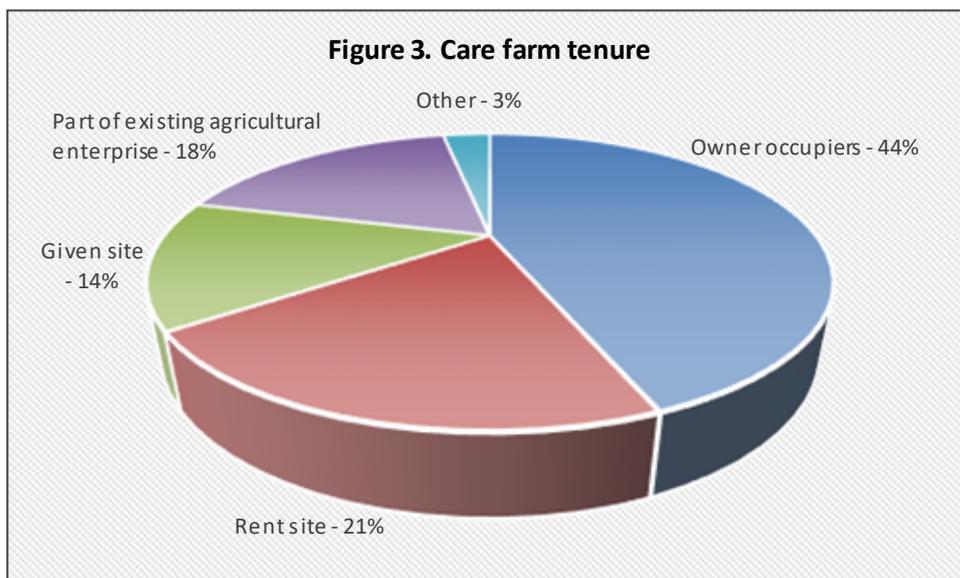
¹³ Figures from Care Farming Scotland website: <https://www.carefarmingscotland.org.uk/what-is-care-farming/care-farms-in-scotland/>

¹⁴ either just private limited companies, those limited by shares or those limited by guarantee without share capital



2.2.2. Care farm land tenure

- This year we asked about the land tenure status and site of care farms. Approximately half of care farmers (49%) are owner occupiers, 29% rent their site, 21% are part of an existing agricultural enterprise and 14% of care farms have been given the land that they use at no charge (see Figure 3).



- The 'other' arrangements that were given included community land initiatives, agricultural tenancies for care farming and a mobile care farming set up which uses other people's sites to deliver the care farming services.

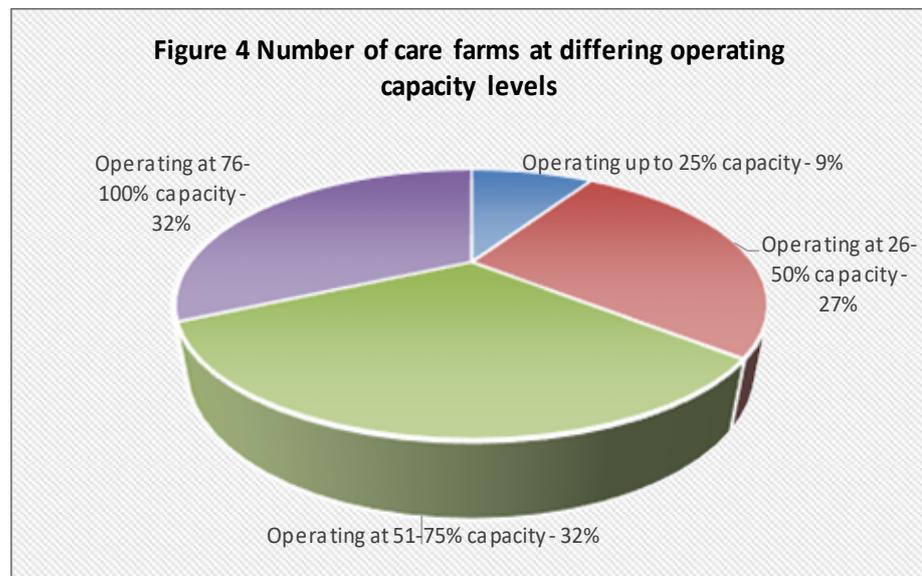
2.2.3. Care farming Code of Practice

- Currently there are 23 care farms that have demonstrated that they meet the care farming Code of Practice standards and another 50 or so working towards the Code. Most of these care farms are in England but we now have 1 care farm in Wales and 1 in Northern Ireland who have reached the Code standard.

2.2.4. Care farm capacity

- The majority of care farms (79%) are not currently running at full capacity and 21% are at capacity (Figure 4).

- The average operating capacity level of UK care farms is currently 65%.



2.3. About the clients attending care farms

2.3.1. Number of clients attending care farms per week

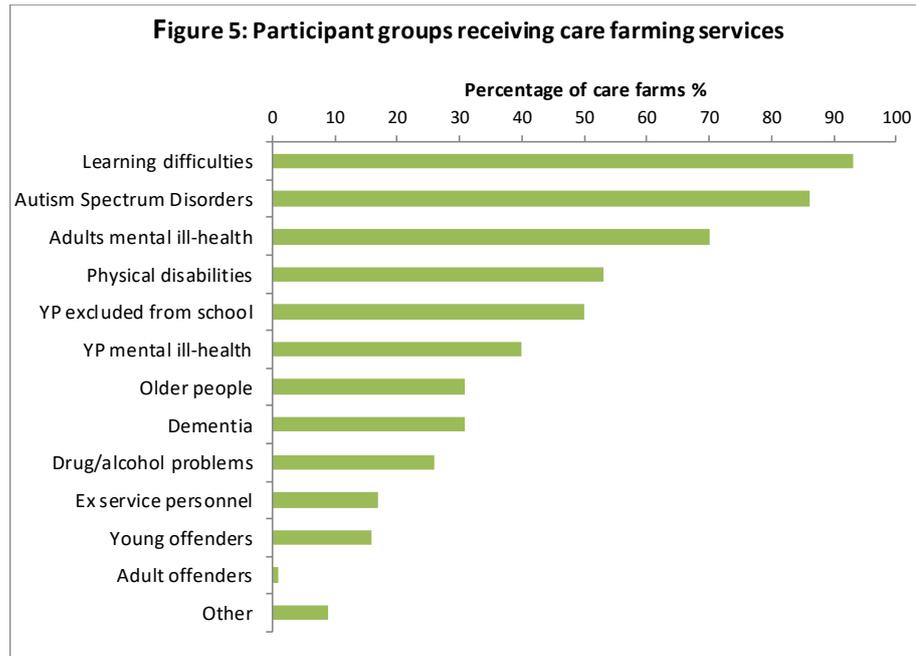
- The number of clients attending a care farm per week varies from farm to farm (from 1 to a maximum of 180¹⁵) but the average number of clients per week is 35. These figures have not changed considerably since the 2015/16 survey.
- Most care farms (78%) see up to 50 clients a week; 17% see between 50-100 clients per week and the remaining 5% of care farms cater for over 100 clients per week.

2.3.2. Client Groups

- Most Care Farms in the UK provide services for a range of client groups, including people with learning difficulties (93% of care farms), autism spectrum disorders (86%), adults with mental ill-health (70%), people with physical disabilities (53%) and young people excluded from school or with behavioural issues (50%) – as shown in Figure 5 and Table 2.2.

¹⁵ although one care farm caters for 300 people per week.

- ‘Other’ groups catered for include: the homeless, people suffering from acquired brain injuries, stroke sufferers, young carers, refugees and asylum seekers and special educational needs students.



- Care farms typically provide services for several different client groups simultaneously¹⁶ – on average, 5 different client groups.

- This varies from farm to farm with 58% of care farms catering for 1-5 client groups; 38% for 6-10 different client groups and 4% catering for over 10 different groups.

Table 2.2 Client groups attending care farms

Client Group	Percentage of Care Farms	Client Group	Percentage of Care Farms
Autism Spectrum Disorders	86%	Young people excluded from school/ with behavioural issues (<18 yrs.)	50%
Learning difficulties	93%	Adult offenders	1%
Adults with mental ill-health	70%	Young offenders (<18 yrs.)	16%
Young people with mental ill-health (<18 yrs.)	40%	Drug/alcohol problems	26%
Physical disabilities	53%	Ex service personnel	17%
Older people	31%	Other	9%
People with dementia	31%		

Note: Percentage of Care Farms represents the percentage of care farms catering for each group (N=70).

¹⁶ Although not always on the same days – depending on whether it is appropriate to mix the client groups or not

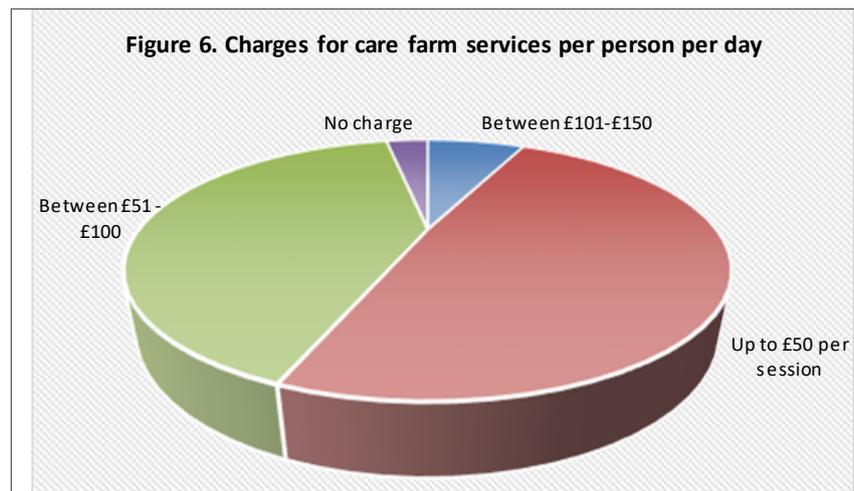
2.4. About the care farming services provided

2.4.1. Frequency of attendance and the duration of care farm sessions and programmes¹⁷

- Most service users (88%) attend care farms between 1 and 3 times a week.
- The length of a care farms session, varies from care farm to care farm and with the needs of each service user. However, most care farming sessions last for a day (typically between 10am and 3pm).
- There is much variation in how long a client stays in a care farming programme, depending again on client need and their referral pathway. Usually this varies from 12 weeks to over 3 years, but on average care farm programmes last for 8-12 months. Nearly half of care farms told us that clients are often enrolled on a programme indefinitely or for as long as they needed.
- Most care farms provide day services for their clients but 4% provide residential care.

2.4.2. Cost of care farming sessions

- The cost per day per client for care farm services ranges from no charge to £150, with the average charge increasing slightly on last year to £52 for a day session.



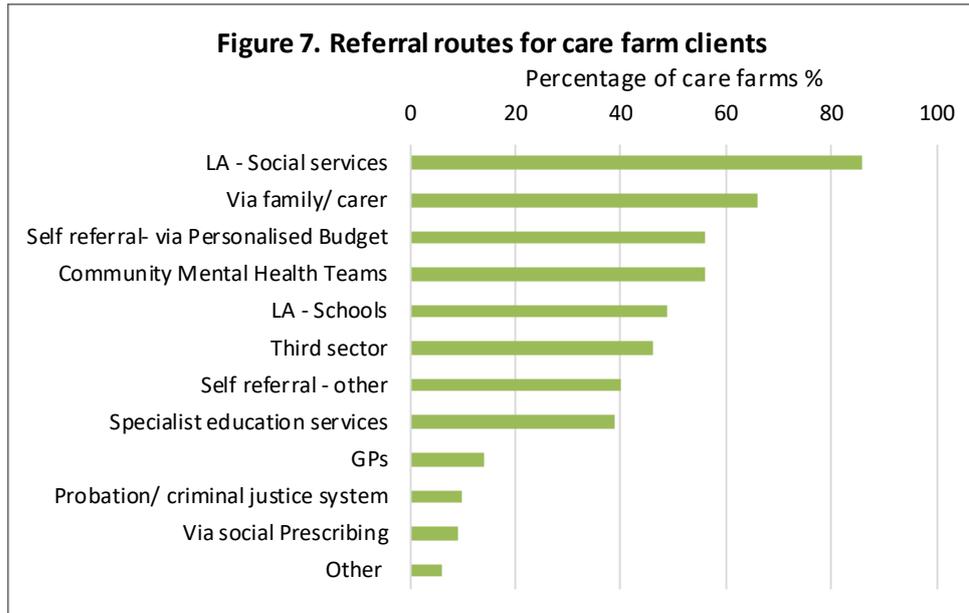
- 58% of care farms charge between £40 and £60 per client per day. With more intensive provision, charges can be higher (up to £300 per day) to ensure the most effective intervention for the client (see Figure 6)
- Some care farms also gave hourly rates for clients ranging from £5-45 per hour with the average being £20.

2.4.3. Referral Routes

- Care farms receive clients from a variety of referral routes (see Figure 5) but most commonly through Local Authority social services (86%), via a client's family or carer (66%), through personalised budgets (56%) and Community Mental Health Teams (56%) – see Figure 7.

¹⁷ In previous years, care farmers were also asked how frequently their clients typically attended their care farm and the length of a typical care farming programme. This data has not changed over 4 years and so the questions were not asked in 2016/17 so the data on programme length is from 2015

- ‘Other’ referral routes included referrals direct from care colleges and via community occupational health services.



- Most care farms have clients referred to them by

several different referral agencies or referral routes at the same time – typically an average of 4 different agencies.

- The majority of care farms (65%) receive referrals from 1-5 different agencies and 35% between 6-10 agencies.

3. Discussion and implications

Numbers of care farms in the UK have continued to grow from 180 in 2012¹⁸; to 230 in 2014¹⁹; 240 in 2015 and 250 in 2016/17 – indicating a recent estimated increase of 10 new care farms a year. However, what we have seen in this current survey that has not been present before, is a significant rise in the number of farmers planning to offer care farm services in the future – i.e. ‘prospective’ care farms – with numbers rising from an estimated 55-60 in 2015 to over 100 in 2016/17.

The development of infrastructure and training for social farming in Ireland (both in the North and the Republic) by Social Farming Ireland has been facilitated by funding and support from the departments of agriculture in both countries²⁰. This has resulted in a significant rise in the scale of care farming in Ireland in recent months – particularly in the Republic where the number of care farms has risen by 75%.

In addition, there has been an increasing interest in care farming by a variety of different commissioners and referral agencies. An important factor in this is the assurance of quality given by the care farming Code of Practice, which has proved very popular with commissioners (particularly from Local Authorities commissioning social care services). The Code of Practice covers everything from safe-guarding, risk assessment and health and safety to staff recruitment, farming activities and evaluation, and is also well-liked by care farmers, with more and more care farmers signing up to go through the Code. With 23 care farms meeting the Code standards and another 50 working through the process, these numbers are set to continue to rise – giving further credibility to the sector regarding provision of quality services. Furthermore, several prospective care farmers are using the Code as a template to work through, to ensure that all aspects are covered, before they open their gates to clients.

It is significant to note that 30% of all care farms have either achieved the Code of Practice or are working towards it – a 15% increase on last year. The number of prospective care farms has nearly doubled, which shows an encouraging level of interest in the sector and will, ultimately, lead to higher numbers of care farms going forward. Given that the R.o.I. have increased both numbers of care farms and prospectives by 75% as a direct result of the investment into their support infrastructure, it can be anticipated that growth in the UK would be equal or greater with a similar injection of funding into a support organisation (such as Care Farming UK).

Care farms continue to offer health, social and special educational care to a wide range of different service user groups including those with learning disabilities, people with Autism Spectrum Disorders, those with a drug history, people on probation, young people at risk and older people, as well as those with mental health issues. This year more care farms are providing services for ex-service personnel. Benefits for those attending care farms come from the combination of three key components: i) the natural outdoor environment; ii) the meaningful farm-based activities; and iii) the social context of working as part of a team. Care farms typically cater for an average of five different client groups at any one time which also has positive implications for increased social inclusion and for breaking down barriers and prejudices between social groups.

Although there is much variation, care farms in the UK typically provide day sessions for their clients costing around £52 per session, with a client attending regularly between 1-3 times a week, for an average of 8 months to a year. Currently only 4% of care farms provide residential places.

¹⁸ Bragg, 2013

¹⁹ Bragg et al., 2014

²⁰ See Appendix A.

To give an estimate of the extent of care farming services for the whole of the UK, the results of this annual survey can be scaled up. Currently, there are approximately 250 care farms known to be operating in the UK. Given that the care farms in this study provide services for a mean number of 35 clients each a week, 250 care farms provide services for an estimated total of 8,750 vulnerable people per week across the UK.

Furthermore, most care farmers in this research stated that their care farm was not currently running at full capacity, with the mean operating capacity standing at 65% (a rise from 57% in 2015). Theoretically therefore, if all the places at existing care farms were filled, care farms could provide around 13,500 clients per week with farming services in the UK. There is therefore a significant amount of latent potential for care farming to expand as an option in health, social and educational care.

Health and social care providers are seeking i) access to non-clinical interventions for their patients - delivered within the local community²¹; and ii) different options for cost effective services - particularly with the challenge of caring for people with dementia and tackling mental ill-health. Care farming already integrates health and social care and provides exactly the style of community-based, non-clinical care sought by the NHS in the Stevens' report.

Care farming also makes a considerable contribution to the rural economy. The average cost of a care farming session is £52. Given that at the current 65% capacity level, an estimated 8,750 people attend care farms in a week, over 40 weeks per year, this is equivalent to a sector spend of approximately £18m²². If these existing care farms were operating at 100% capacity in future (over 40 weeks), this would equate to approximately £28m per year²³.

In addition to providing valuable health and wellbeing benefits to service users and engaging more people in agriculture, care farming therefore provides new opportunities for small family farms who may be seeking alternative ways to use their farms and farming experiences post-Brexit; where income is independent of farm prices and the weather, whilst retaining and developing rural skills, employment and associated services.

²¹ For example, through social prescribing

²² Based on an estimate of 8750 people at £52 per session - approximately £455,000 per week into agriculture. 40 weeks a year rather than 52 as many care farms are only open during term times

²³ At full capacity based on 13,500 people at £52 per session - approximately £702,000 per week into agriculture. 40 weeks a year rather than 52 as many care farms are only open during term times

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Appendix A – Social farming in Ireland

Republic of Ireland

Social farming in Ireland²⁴ is the practice of offering family farms as a form of social service. The farm is not a specialised treatment farm; rather the farm remains a typical working farm where people in need of support can benefit from participation in the farms' activities in a non-clinical environment.

A survey in 2007 estimated there were around 10 private care farms and around 80 institutional farms or sheltered workshops offering care farm type services in Ireland²⁵. From 2006-2008 Ireland was involved in the So Far Project, which involved 7 countries including: Italy, the Netherlands, Germany, Belgium, France, Slovenia and Ireland; and this gave rise to the development of the SoFAB project.

The SoFAB (Social Farming Across Borders) project²⁶ was a cross border EU funded project facilitating the development of a cross border cross sector network to further support the development of social farming in the area. The project established 20 pilot farms in the region to enhance the ability of farmers to provide social Farming and test the training and support needed to make is a viable option in the future. Social Farming Ireland was established in 2015 to continue the work of the SoFAB Project and have Support Offices both North and South of the border.

The supports that which Social Farming Ireland (SoFI) are now delivering to farmers and to service providers is resulting in a significant expansion in interest and in practice. This is funded by the Department of Agriculture Food and the Marine (DAFM) through the CEDRA fund²⁷ and it is hoped that this will continue into 2018 and beyond.

SoFI have just completed a round of training and induction for prospective Social farms and 65 people took part, from right around the country. Large numbers of these farmers are now ready to engage in active practice on farm as many of them have engagements with services and participants. Social Farming Ireland have over 800 interested parties on their National Social Farming Network database and the majority of these are farmers. For more information see:

<http://www.socialfarmingcrossborders.org/>

Northern Ireland

In Northern Ireland, the Social Farming Support Service is now staffed full-time by the Coordinator and is funded by the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) within the Northern Ireland executive, for the financial year 2017-2018 (up to 31 March 2018) with the opportunity for further funding beyond that. The funding is allocated under the Tackling Rural Poverty and Social Isolation Programme. For more information see:

<http://www.ruralsupport.org.uk/social-farming-northern-ireland/>

²⁴ This section is adapted from the SoFAB website: <http://www.socialfarmingcrossborders.org/> and from personal communication with staff at Social Farming Ireland in May and June 2017

²⁵ McGloin and O Connor, 2007

²⁶ Organisations involved in this project include: University College Dublin (Lead Partner), Queen's University Belfast and Leitrim Development Company with representatives from the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development Northern Ireland and the Colleges of Agriculture Food and Rural Enterprise. There is also an independent Advisory Group comprising representatives with experience of Social and Care Farming in the UK, Scotland and Ireland, as well as representatives from Health Services in NI and ROI and SoFAB Network members.

²⁷ See <https://www.agriculture.gov.ie/cedra/socialfarming/>

Appendix B – The need for an annual survey of the care farming sector

In 2008 the National Care Farming Initiative undertook the first scoping study of care farms in the UK and since then two further surveys have been undertaken in 2012 and in 2014. After the 2014 survey, Care Farming UK undertook to i) categorise and map data for the current provision of care farming services across the UK annually and ii) to make accessible all non-commercially sensitive data and evidence of benefits, to a wider audience, in particular to commissioners²⁸.

A collaborative study between Care Farming UK and Natural England in 2015 (which looked at expanding delivery of care farming services to health and social care commissioners²⁹) recommended that Care Farming UK should continue to work with other supporting organisations to significantly improve the promotion of care farming services at a national level to the general public (including potential service users, carers and their families); to strategic health and social care commissioning agencies (such as: NHS England, Public Health England and the Local Government Association); and to patient representation bodies and specialist advice organisations (e.g. MIND, Alzheimer’s Society etc.).

A lack of information on available placements was also identified by commissioners in the 2015 study as a barrier to care farm commissioning, therefore up to date information on available care farm placements needs to be widely available. As a result of these recommendations, Care Farming UK has now made information on the location of all known care farms in the UK available on our website, and has made details of care farms who are members of Care Farming UK public to enable commissioners to locate care farms in their area and to see what services Care Farming UK members provide. The 2015 Care Farming ‘State of Play’ survey was undertaken and published (see [here](#)) and this report represents an update for 2016/2017.

Appendix C – Further details of survey responses

A total of 89 UK care farms and prospective care farms responded to the annual survey – comprising 70 care farms and 19 prospective care farms. This represents 28% of care farms and 24% of prospective care farms in the UK.

61 care farms³⁰ and 18 prospective care farms³¹ from England, 1 care farm³² from Wales, 4 care farms³³ and 3 prospective care farms³⁴ from Scotland, 4 care farms³⁵ and 3 prospective care farms³⁶ from Northern Ireland and 1 care farm³⁷ and 3 prospective care farms³⁸ from R.o.I., took part in this year’s annual survey.

²⁸ Commissioners is a broad term for those organisations, and individuals, who pay for the services available from care farms, and include Health & Well-being Boards, Clinical Commissioning Groups, local authorities, Probation Trusts, and organisations that will influence commissioning such as Public Health England

²⁹ Full report available at: <http://www.carefarminguk.org/sites/carefarminguk.org/files/NECR194%20edition%201.pdf>

³⁰ 31% of total number of care farms in England

³¹ 30% of total number of prospective care farms in England

³² 13 % of total number of care farms in Wales

³³ 20 % of total number of care farms in Scotland

³⁴ 25% of total number of prospective care farms in Scotland

³⁵ 27% of total number of care farms in Northern Ireland

³⁶ 20% of total number of prospective care farms in Northern Ireland

³⁷ 3% of total number of care farms in RoI

³⁸ 9% of total number of prospective care farms in RoI