

Pathways :
Finding the right Successor
for your Land / Farm &
Opportunities for
New Entrants for a
Resilient Farm Future

A case-study approach to finding succession options for small to larger farms - welcome

- Chair and Speakers:
 1. **Gabriel Kaye** – welcome and intro
 2. **Tom Carman** - succession challenges study by Shared Assets with ELC etc
 3. **Christine Meadows** –Springham Farm manager: Starting the process and finding the candidates; contracts and share farming options plus a business approach to succession
 4. **Rachel Philips** – Apricot education and training manager – challenges of sufficient training
 5. **Louisa Ellerker** - a whole farm approach, cooperative ways of working that help succession + what is a good candidate
 6. **Gabriel** - BD Land Trust – AFM approach
 7. **David Riddle** land agent and SALT; – What to do if you have no obvious successors - Conservation covenants as protection for your land

Finding the next stage for my farm

- if I have no family to take it on ... we explore

- What are useful paths and choices?
- Where do I start?
- When is the best time to look at succession?

Finding a successor

- Challenges and ways to look for potential candidates?
- Consider training up the next generation yourself?

Looking at

ways to bring in others as part of your farm's future

- enterprise stacking,
- subcontracting activities,
- share farming,
- community engagement and
- feeding the nation (locally) – the local market

Succession offers:

- Opportunities for entrant farmers to engage;
- How can we enable the next generation?


Training and Skills

- What trainings and skills are important in farm succession candidates ? What are my farm's needs?
- How can I engage with further education and CPD for potential candidates for the future of my farm –
- How can increasing capacity and skills enable farmers of the future?

[shared assets]

Finding the right successor

ORFC 2024



with land we create



with land we flourish



with land
we can



with land we challenge



with land we connect

What needs navigating



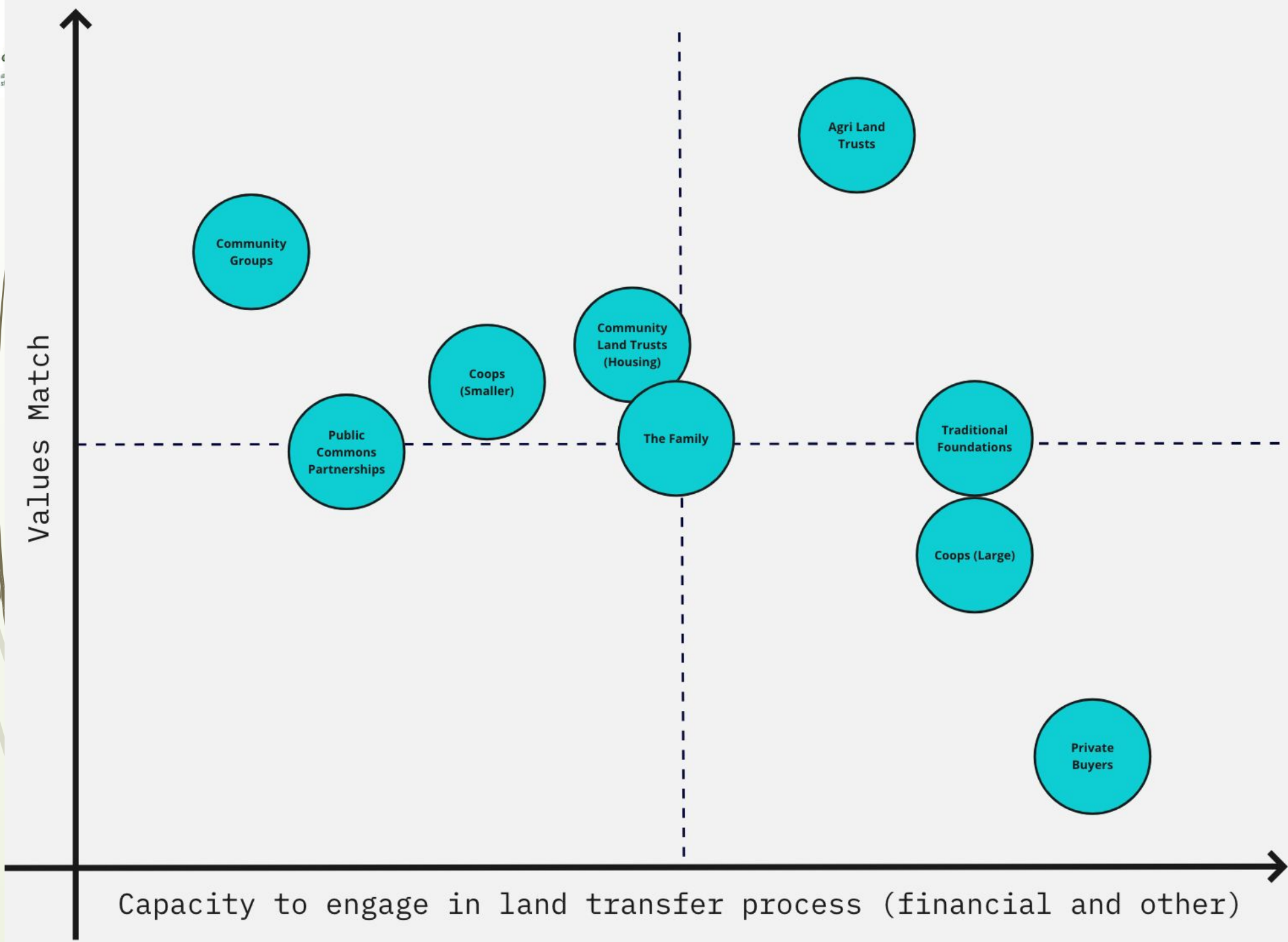
A process of reflection and decisions

- Financial
- Cultural
- Social
- Racial
- Familial
- Legals

Really important

- Compassion for landowners

Who to consider



A justice led approach

Accountability Panels


The power to decide who next



1. Communities are marginalised from land due to
 - Place
 - Practice
 - Race
 - Interest
 - Identity

1. A reparative approach to decision making
 - **Shares** power
 - Power of knowledge and lived experience
 - Power in decision making
 - is accountable to those who have been marginalised

1. Lots of questions
 - How to build comfort with external involvement
 - trust
 - Who is selected and how
 - Remuneration - who much and who



with land we create



with land we flourish



[shared assets]

with land
we can

Tom Carman

tom@sharedassets.org.uk



with land we challenge



with land we connect

Springham enterprise stack



Vision, brand, communications				
Partner selection and contracts				
Space, facilities and accommodation				
Education and community engagement				
Grassland regeneration and livestock management	Vegetable and food growing and marketing	Mushroom cultivation and marketing	Soil biology improvement	Farm engineering
Commercial rental	Deer control	?Wellness	Children's Forest	Bee keeping
Electricians	Builders	Vet	Accountant	

ORFC 2024 - Succession

- Have a skills plan – gaps and requirements
- Use in-sourcing in setup phases
- Set clear boundaries and expectations
- Understand what needs to be held in the core team
- Budget for counselling
- Expect to grow people into roles

The challenge of succession

- It is hard for everyone
- Start as soon as possible (taps & pipes layout; take a holiday)
- Use a mediator if conversations are hard (Heather Wildman)
- Only with clear expectations from all can a plan be made

Rachel Phillips

Regenerative Agriculture Training

Paving the way for resilience and sustainability in
lands, lives and livelihoods through education



Battery Road



Core educational offerings & engagements

Training offered in

- Agroforestry
- Soil Ecology
- Plant ecology
- Water management
- Livestock management
- Regenerative design
- Business planning and finances

short courses

PDC
Biodynamics
ECO-nomics
Agroforestry



Accredited
Level 2
Level 3
Level 4

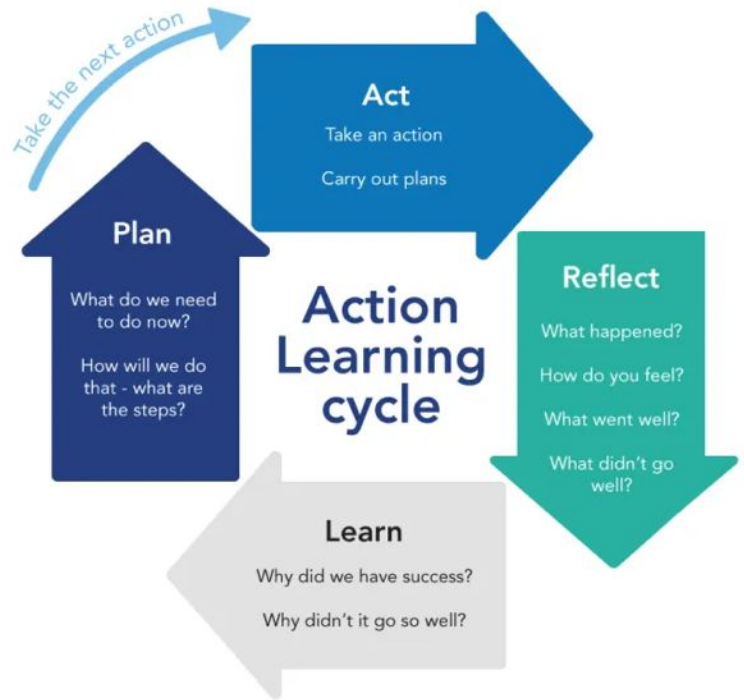
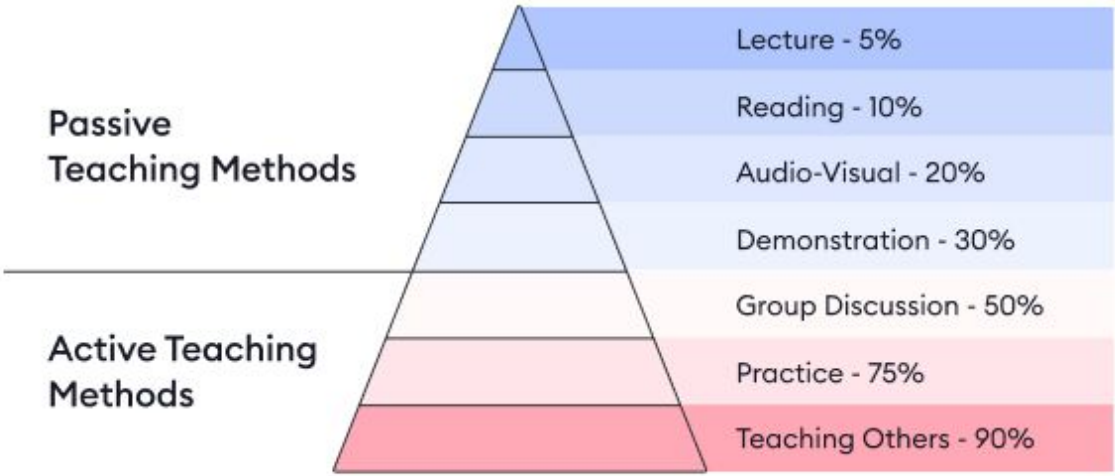
Long courses

ORFC
Festivals
TALC
NFU
...etc...

Workshops & talks

Types of training

The Learning Pyramid



Some numbers to speak
for themselves

Biodynamic
Land Trust
giving farmland for a living, working countryside

430+ expressions of interest
200+ applicants in first year

23 to 25 trainees per year
on 13 to 16 placement farms

80% stay in agriculture

Visions

- Regional subsites
- Accredited short courses
- Apprenticeship Degree
- Apprenticeship Scheme
- Support others who want to do the same
- Farm start and train the trainer - Land Workers Alliance
- TALC - the ecological learning collective

Training provider to explore

- BD Agriculture College – online general, work based learning level 3, BD viticulture
- The Plot, & Kindling Trust (LWA initiatives) level 2 horticulture
- The Apricot Centre – as per Rachels presentation – levels 2-4
- Ruskin Mill Trust – level 3, HND and Masters (includes working with people, not just farm and veg)
- Higher level
 - RAU
 - CAWR
 -



Louisa Ellerker
Biodynamic Farmer

louisa@plawhatchfarm.co.uk



Plaw Hatch Farm Ltd - A Biodynamic Community Farm

Founded 45 years ago

200 acres home farm, rent 300 acres

7 households live on the farm (approx. 15 people)

Employ approx. 40 people

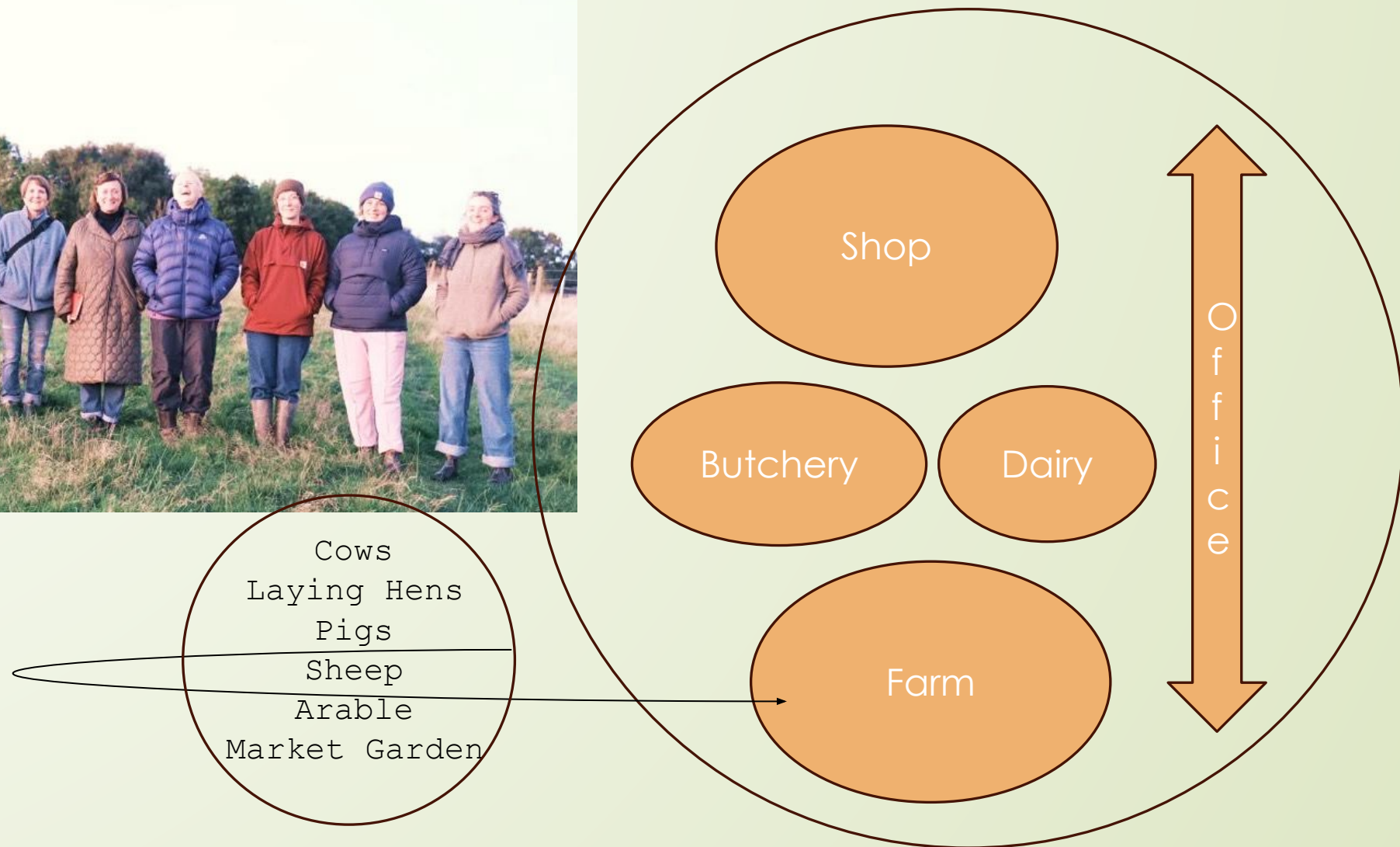
Mixed enterprises & 1st generation farmers



Stacked Enterprises at Plaw Hatch



Plaw hatch managers



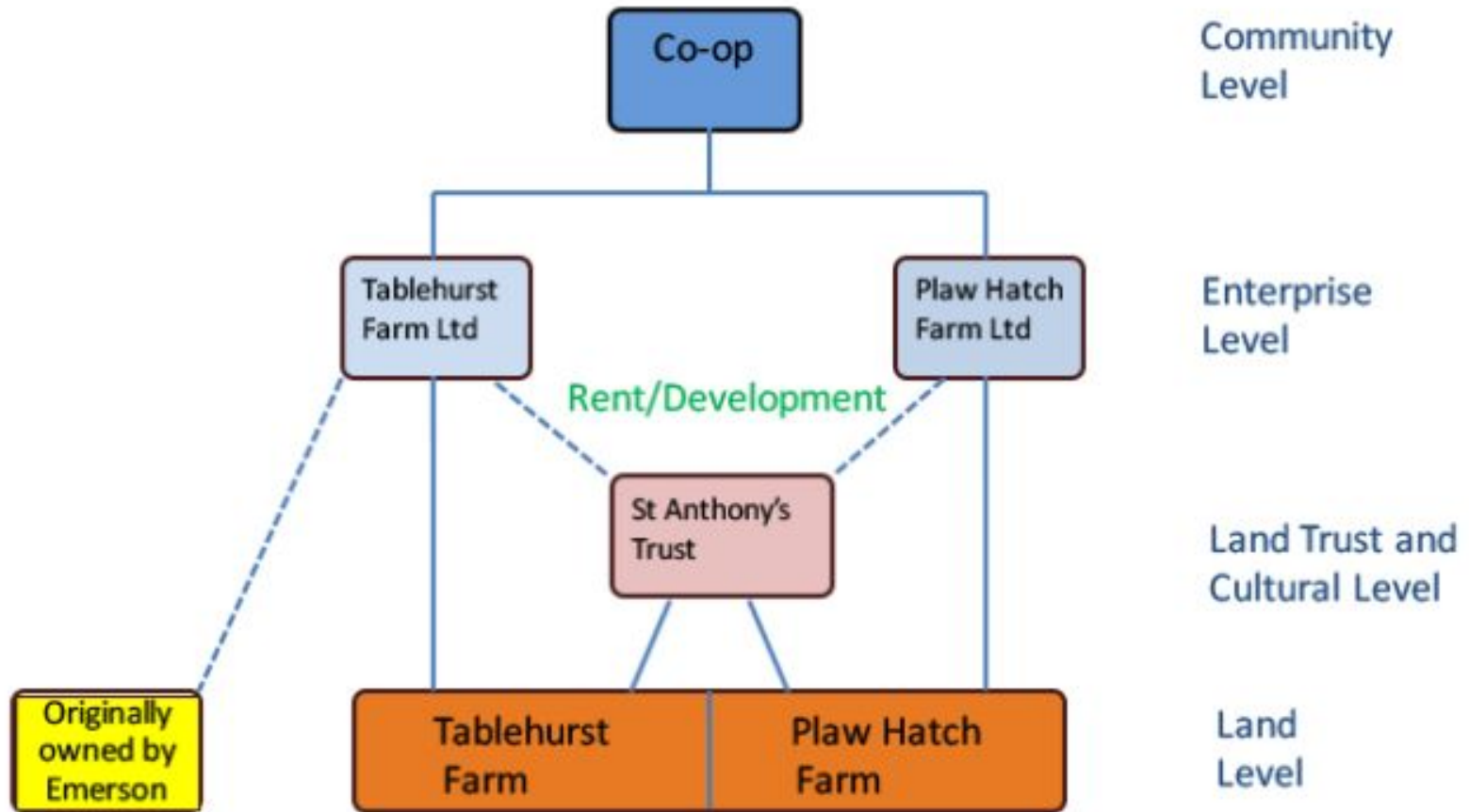


Who owns the farm?

Stakeholders of Plaw Hatch Farm



Tablehurst and Plaw Hatch Community Farm





Thoughts on
Succession in this
model

Responsibility

How do we as employed farmers ensure we feel responsible to the land and business?

Flat management structure

Long term staff - we are 'Plaw hatch'

Decent housing

Community dynamics - living and working together relies on resilient dynamic culture

Can become stagnant and overwhelmed by lack of 'ownership' but high responsibility



Regeneration

Who will be the next farmers?

People approach us who want to learn & can direct them to the BDA and BD Agriculture College - we take students from there.

Inspirational futures?

We have a house just for apprentices & volunteers

Paid a living wage

Volunteers & student placements

Are there enough farming jobs for us to go to?

Inequality in the countryside



Retirement?

What happens to old farmers?

Retirement = leaving the farm

Farmers will be on a basic pension, with no house

Do we reinvest our profit into retirement funds?

Feelings of 'get out before its too late'

Brain drain when loosing tenants of the land

Do community businesses have an obligation?

Create a farm structure where we can be replaceable





Any Questions?



The BD Land Trust's offer and ways of engaging

1. Engagement and exploration – the future of your farm and your needs ...
2. Discussion of options
3. Associate Farm Membership – building relationship as an option and assuring a viable farm activity
4. Being part of a family of farms – a learning community
5. Financial options and challenges

Conservation covenants

A new tool for land protection

David Riddle
Soil Association Land
Trust





- Want to protect your land from development?
- Want to protect your land from industrial farming?
- Can't afford to give it away?
- Conservation Covenants might provide an answer?

Conservation Covenants are **NEW**

Introduced by the Environment Act
2021



Old restrictive covenants

- Could only be negative
- Had to benefit some adjoining land

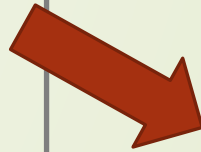
New Conservation Covenants

- Can be positive and prescriptive
- Can stand alone

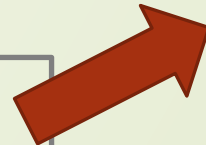
How to create Conservation Covenants?



A Responsible
Body



A willing
landowner



Responsible Bodies



There aren't any
yet

But they can be:

- A local Authority
- A public body or charity with a conservation purpose
- Another body with a conservation purpose



The application process is
now open in England

Landowners that could benefit

- Owners that want to protect their land after they retire or die
- Conservation bodies that want to protect land without having to buy the freehold
- Developers who need to secure Biodiversity Net Gain



About the agreement



- It has to be for a conservation purpose
- It runs with the land not the owner
- It can be any length but likely to be 30 years to perpetuity as agreed between the parties
- Can require positive management e.g. organic farming or a specified management plan
- Compliance will be monitored by the Responsible Body



Financial considerations

- Impact on land value
- Costs to Responsible Body
 - Liaison with covenantors
 - Legal costs of set up
 - Monitoring compliance
 - Annual reporting
 - Advice to covenantors
 - Legal enforcement of non-compliance

How will they be funded?

The Responsible Body is most likely to require a capital sum to cover costs for the lifetime of the covenant.

This could come from:

- A gift from a benevolent landowner
- Proceeds from the sale of land
- Fundraising by a conservation body seeking to purchase covenants
- Purchase of Conservation Credits by a developer



What Next?



If SALT application is successful:

- Promotion of opportunity to interested parties
- Development of template agreements
- Development of model management regimes
- Pilot agreements with early adopters

Any Questions

- If time –
 - talk to your neighbour
 - About your questions
 - About what you have heard
 - About where you are in this process
 1. Finding a long term place with prospects
 2. Finding a successor for your farm