

Business Plan
July 2007

Wye Community Farm

*A new chapter for
food and farming in Wye*





The Wye College Farm/ Wye Community Land Trust

Business Plan, in support of tender for Farm Business Tenancy

July 2007

Terms of tender

This tender is for a 10 year Farm Business Tenancy on the Dairy Unit and 265Ha (lots 1 and 6), commencing Michaelmas 2007.

Name of business

Wye Community Farm Limited

Registered as an Industrial and Provident Society, No. 30276 R

Holding no: 20 / 049 / 8009

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The Wye College Farm/ Wye Community Land Trust

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The Wye College Farm/ Wye Community Land Trust

Business Plan

Section 1: Introduction

1) The Wye College Farm

With research and academic activity on the Wye College Farm coming to an end, a tenancy is being offered by Imperial College London.

The farm extends to 320 Ha, and includes a dairy unit, pig unit, sheep unit, workshop and equine unit. For a site map and field plan see Appendix 1. For further details on the history of the farm see the WCF website.

2) The Wye Community Land Trust

In anticipation of a tenancy being offered on The Wye College Farm, a number of local residents, farmers and Wye graduates came together in autumn 2006 to explore the possibility of a community-led bid for the tenancy. The steering group of the Wye Community Land Trust has spent the last 9 months carrying out extensive research into Community Land Trusts/ Community Supported Agriculture, recruiting specialist advice where needed, and conducting a wide ranging public consultation exercise. A public meeting in April 2007, and on-going feedback via return forms and the website, has shown overwhelming public support and allowed the steering group to fine-tune the vision for the Wye Community Farm. In anticipation of tendering for the tenancy, the Wye Community Farm Limited was incorporated in July 2007.

3) The Vision

It is the vision of the Wye Community Farm Limited (henceforth referred to as WCF) to take on the tenancy of The Wye College Farm, and to manage the farm according to the following central aims and objectives:

- To operate a range of agricultural enterprises, demonstrating best practice within a commercial framework
- To manage the land sympathetically to protect and enhance Wye's biodiversity and landscape quality.
- To provide employment, training and volunteering opportunities.
- To form close links with schools and act as an 'outdoor classroom'.
- To produce an economic return sufficient to support the above aims and enable investment in related social and environmental initiatives.



Through the above, Wye College Farm's international reputation as being at the forefront of rural land use issues over the last 100 years could be both enhanced and continued to address the new challenges of the 21st Century. Achieving this vision would, as such, reflect great credit on both the Wye Community Farm and its landlord.

4) Legal/ Financial/ Management structure

- The WCF is incorporated as an Industrial and Provident Society (IPS) for the benefit of the community, regulated under the Industrial and Provident Societies Acts 1965-2003.
- The WCF will raise sufficient funds to secure the tenancy and equip and stock the farm, through a share issue.
- Each share will cost £50, with anyone owning a share becoming a member of the WCF. Sufficient pledges to buy shares have been made to support the business plan.
- The WCF will be managed by a Board, elected from and by the members. (One vote per member, irrespective of the number of shares owned).
- The Board will appoint a farm manager, who will be supported by the Board in delivering the objectives of the WCF.
- Trading surpluses (profits) will be used to maintain prudent reserves and on expenditure necessary to achieve the Trust's objectives. Interest may be paid on shares.
- In the event of closure of the WCF, residual funds will be returned to members in proportion to their original investment and/or distributed to similar bodies.
- Establishment of the core farming business will be financed by the share issue. Additionally, significant opportunities now exist to secure funding for added-value initiatives such as direct marketing, education etc. These funds will be pursued for such ancillary activities as identified in this business plan, but are not key to the core business.

5) Overview

The decision making process for this business needs to be informed by the following factors:

- Economics.
- The length of tenancy and the level of investment thus justified.
- The wishes of the WCF membership to see external benefits beyond food production, principally in the areas of education and environmental protection.
- The physical, climatic and infrastructure attributes/ constraints of the farm.



- The opportunities to fill missing local demands and complement other local enterprises.

Taking the above factors into consideration, it has been possible for the WCF steering group to narrow down the possible options as identified through the public consultation exercise.

To give some examples:

- Intensive commodity cropping - Financially attractive, but comparatively low value for educational trips and wider environmental objectives.
- Large-scale milk production - Possible in terms of land availability and compatible with educational role, but would require significant infrastructure investment to expand cow numbers.
- Extensive livestock grazing for beef/lamb production - High environmental appeal, but unlikely to pay the rent on its own.
- Direct sale of beef/pork/lamb/veg/eggs etc in the local area - High compatibility with the aims of the WCF membership, but equally high potential to clash with existing local direct sales initiatives (farmers markets, farm shops etc)
- Workshops for rural crafts/start-up business - High employment and training potential, but significant investment needed and the buildings to which such activity most suited (sheep unit, Sidelands) are outside of this tenancy.
- Viticulture/Hops/ Top Fruit - Potentially profitable in the long run, but not possible given the length of tenancy and lack of infrastructure.

Having taken all of the above into account, it is the opinion of the WCF steering group and its technical advisors that the business plan for the Wye Community Farm should be based on:

- Low input milk production, beef and lamb enterprises.
- Development of added value/ direct sales enterprises relating to the above.
- Conventional commodity cropping, with scope for future novel crops (eg biofuels).
- Full use of agri-environment schemes, including partial organic conversion.
- Educational work, primarily through school visits and on-line educational resources to support the National Curriculum.
- Collaborative work with neighbouring food and farming enterprises.



Section 2: Years 1-3

6) Current farming system

Combinable crops: 180Ha

Forage Crops: 120Ha

Organic (veg/ arable rotation): 20Ha

Cows: Holstein herd, with numbers decreasing in recent years (currently around 70 head)

Sheep: 150 Suffolk ewes.

Pigs: Largely dispersed.

For the purposes of developing this business plan, it was assumed that the tenancy would comprise the dairy unit and around 300 Ha of bare land. This assumption was based on the belief that the pig unit, sheep unit, equine unit, Sidelands, and other buildings/land with potential strategic value, would either be retained by ICL or let under separate agreement.

With release of the tender documents, the WCF is able to confirm that it wishes to tender for lots 1 and 6, i.e. the dairy unit and 265 Ha of bare land.

7) Summary of proposals

Priority areas of activity during years 1 -3 will be:

- Continuation of milk production, beef and sheep enterprises.
- Cropping sufficient to meet livestock feed requirements.
- Conventional commodity cropping.
- Application for Agri-environment schemes (Primarily ELS, some HLS and OELS).
- Educational trips for schools.
- Researching, and securing external funding for, added-value enterprises, principally a meat box scheme and milk processing facility.

8) Organic conversion

There are several reasons why organic conversion should be considered for part of the farm:

- To complement, and allow for future collaboration with the existing organic vegetable enterprise (lot 2).
- In terms of biodiversity, educational work, public perception etc, an organic system is an attractive measure.



- The continuing, and forecast to be long term, growth in the organic market points towards a sustained high demand both for direct sales of organic produce and indirect sales via certified livestock feed.

Against this must be balanced the following factors:

- The absence of either on-farm grain storage or local certified pooling opportunities, makes organic cereal production for sale problematic.
- The above leads, in turn, to logistical (and hence financial) concerns regarding operating a conventional commodity cropping enterprise alongside a smaller area of certified arable for livestock feed requirements.
- Discussions with milk buyers have confirmed that, due to our geographic location on the outer edge of the 'milk field', relying on getting organic milk collected once converted would be a high risk strategy.
- With regards the aim to develop direct sales, the public consultation exercise has shown 'local' and 'traceable' to be as important as 'organic'.
- All the advice taken confirms that organic conversion is a long-term commitment, only to be entered into once the core farming business is established and the farm manager is confident in, and committed to, taking the decision to convert.

Taking all of the above factors into consideration, it is proposed to commence conversion of 14Ha to organic status at the start of year 2 , where the biodiversity benefits outweigh the yield foregone and where organic status may open up future opportunities (eg crop rotation with lot 2). Consideration will be given to further organic conversion, recognising that decisions on this will be as much down to the preferences of the farm manager and economics as to the membership of the WCF.

9) Milk production

It is difficult to see how to maintain milk production on the farm on current commodity milk prices. Conversely, there are important factors which make maintaining a dairy herd a priority for the WCF:

- The desire to develop the farm as an important educational resource for the region, with demonstration of commercial dairy farming being a key component of this educational role.
- The environmental imperative to reduce food miles, as reflected in increasing public demand for local food.

To deliver the above and improve financial performance, the income received from 'farmgate' milk sales will be enhanced by:

- Income generation from school trips, via fees and grant aid.
- The introduction of direct sales, with milk being processed and bottled on site for sale in the local area.



On commencement of tenancy, milk sales will be to *(discussions taking place.)*

Milk sales will be 420,000 litres/ year (70 cows @ 6,000 l). The WCF would wish to purchase the 804,652 litres of quota, available by separate negotiation.

10) Herd Management

It is envisaged that on commencement of tenancy the dairy herd will largely comprise the youngest cattle from the existing Holstein herd (as being offered by separate negotiation). The herd is aged, but offers the advantage of continuity and reduced disease risk. Cows will be cross-bred to facilitate a move towards a lower-input system. Numbers will be made up to 70 during year one through buying in.

The dairy herd will be managed on a largely self-sufficient system, with feeding based on grass/clover leys, silage/hay, and supplementary home produced cereals and protein. Milking will be through the existing 8/16 herringbone parlour (with school visits making use of the existing viewing gallery above the dairy). The advice of the existing dairy engineer has been sought, and the WCF is confident that the parlour can be serviced at a reasonable rate for the term of the tenancy. The highest maintenance costs are incurred on the aged feeders, but we would look to discontinue in-parlour feeding in any event. Removing the feeders will make the cows more visible from the viewing gallery, and the parlour and milking process will be cleaner (at several levels) without cows being fed.

Although the dairy unit can in theory accommodate around 140 cows, the fact that no other buildings are to be included in the tenancy means that other requirements - grain and straw storage, machinery/workshop, sheep and youngstock, educational facilities - will limit maximum numbers to around 80 cows. Additionally, the aged state of some buildings means that cattle numbers must be limited in order to maintain high health and safety and legal welfare standards and the image necessary for an 'open farm'.

11) Other livestock

The youngest of the existing Suffolk ewes may be retained if available at an agreeable price, with numbers then built up to 100 head by buying in a breed more suited to a low input system (eg Lleyn/Romney cross).

All progeny will be retained; heifers as replacements, bull calves and lambs to be taken through to slaughter (less 25 ewe lambs/yr for replacements). A pen of fattening pigs will be kept, both to turn waste from the dairy into profit and to add to the educational trips.

12) Cropping

Land use will be as follows:

A) Livestock feed

- Winter forage requirements will be around 1.5t DM/cow. At 7.5t DM/Ha, 20 Ha of silage will be required for the dairy herd. To allow for followers, beef rearing, and sheep, a total of **30 Ha/yr** should be allocated for forage conservation (mainly silage, some hay).



- At a stocking rate of 3 cows/Ha throughout the grazing season, 25 Ha of grazing will be required for the dairy herd. At 10 ewes/Ha, 10 Ha will be required for sheep. A further 10Ha should be allowed for followers and beef. A total of **40 Ha** of permanent pasture and grass/clover leys will therefore be required for grazing.
- Concentrate use will be around 1t/cow, with homegrown cereals/protein crops largely meeting these requirements. At an average yield across these crops of 5t/Ha, 20Ha of arable cropping will be needed for herd requirements. A further 5Ha should be grown to allow for followers, beef and sheep, making a total combinable crops requirement of 25Ha

B) Conventional commodity cropping.

155Ha will be committed to conventional arable cropping for sale; see Appendix 1 for cropping plan.

C) Agri-environment schemes

10 Ha will be in agri-environment schemes; set-aside/CSS/HLS

Land use during years 1-3 can therefore be summarised as follows

Forage crops (grazing, conservation)	70Ha
Cropping for feed	25Ha
Cropping for sale	155 Ha
Agri-environment schemes	10Ha
Buildings, tracks, hedges	5Ha
Total	265Ha

To accommodate field size/location/access/topography, and to follow on from witnessed 2006-07 cropping, actual cropping during years 1 -3 will be as shown in Appendix 1

See Appendix 1 for field-by-field cropping plan

13) Crop management

All arable operations for years 1-3 will be carried out on a contract basis, for the following reasons:

- The need to prioritise available start-up capital.
- Autumn cultivations in year one will need to commence in advance of appointment of WCF staff.
- Allows budgeting to be more certain through the use of contract agreements rather than taking on the variables of in-house machinery.

For all arable operations, a three year agreement has been reached and draft heads of agreement drawn up with*Commercially sensitive*

14) Resource management



A priority on commencement of tenancy will be to repair the dilapidated guttering on the buildings. At present all rainwater is going into the lagoon, representing both a waste of a valuable resource and an increased cost through slurry handling. All roof rainwater will be harvested, and used for drinking water/ parlour washdown. FYM will be composted, alongside municipal green waste from Wye and Brook as both an income stream and additional source of fertility.

15) Meat box scheme

During year two a direct sales enterprise for lamb will be introduced, (with beef to follow in year 3). This will be targeted at WCF members, who will be offered the opportunity to receive a meat box as a part of their involvement as members. The target in year two will be to market 100 lambs to WCF members (half lamb/box, so 200 box sales).

16) Agri-environment schemes

Agri-environment funding is available through the new Environmental Stewardship Schemes. The farm will apply for Entry Level Scheme at the earliest opportunity over the whole holding area in order to take advantage of a secure source of funding. At the end of the first year an application will be made to transfer selected fields on the holding into the Organic Entry Level Scheme. In light of the forthcoming expiry of the Countryside Stewardship Scheme (CSS), this will also provide an ideal opportunity to apply for a combined Higher Level Scheme (HLS)/OELS/ELS scheme.

Proposals :

Year 1

a) Entry Level Scheme (ELS)

The farm will apply for Entry Level Scheme on whole farm area (eligible ELS area = 258ha). The points threshold of 7740 will be achieved :

Option	Area (ha)	Points
EE3 buffer strips	0.64*	256
EF4 Pollen plots	2	900
EF3 Wild bird seed plots	2	900
EF1 Field Corner	1	400
EK3 V.Low input grassland	25**	3750
EF6 Winter Stubbles	5	750
EB1 hedgerow management	1000m	220
EB6 ditch management	500m	120
Management Plans		774
Farm Environment Record		774
Total Points		8844

* Excludes existing CSS 6m margins



** Outlying grassland (not associated with dairy unit)

This will generating an income of : **£7740 per year**

Year 2

An application will be made for a combined ELS/OELS/HLS scheme comprising :

a) an Entry Level Scheme (ELS) continuing on approximately 242ha of conventionally managed arable and grassland. This will generate an income of:

£7260 per year

The points threshold (7260) will be achieved using a continuation of the ELS options :

Option	Area (ha)	Points
EE3 buffer strips	2.16	864
EF4 Pollen plots	2	900
EF3 Wild bird seed plots	2	900
EF1 Field Corner	1	400
EF6 Winter Stubbles	5	750
EK3 V. Low input grassland	25	3750
EB1 hedgerow management	1000m	220
EB6 ditch management	500m	120
Management Plans		726
Farm Environment Record	153ha	726
Total Points		9356

b) Organic Entry Level Scheme (OELS)

To reflect the organic conversion on approximately 14ha (chiefly comprising the lighter footslope fields of the escarpment) the farm will apply for Organic Entry Level Scheme (OELS) on this area. In order to qualify for the £60/ha rate, the farm will need to acquire 989 points on the organic registered land. This will allow the farm to receive :

£989 per year

Plus organic conversion top-up payments* (£175/ha per year for the first 2 years of OELS)

£2,885 per year (for first 2 years)

The points for entry into OELS will be accrued as follows :

Option	Area (ha)	Points
OE3 6m buffer strips	0.66	330
OB2 Hedge management	250m	27
OU1 organic management	14	494



Farm Environment Record	14	49
Management Plans		113
Total Points		1013

c) Higher Level Scheme (HLS)

The farm lies within the new and recently identified (July 2007) target areas for HLS. If successful, and following consent from the landlord, the farm would sign up to a 10 year agreement for annual management payments on selected areas of the farm commencing 1st August/November 2008. The farm is ideally suited to take advantage of HLS, supporting both a range of habitats and species targeted by HLS and also demonstrating potential for increasing public awareness through educational access opportunities. Natural England have confirmed that the HLS options of interest for the farm would be:

Measures for species rich chalk grassland	
Species rich grassland restoration / recreation @£200 ha on part of N. and S. Sidelands (currently wildflower trial plots and set aside)	£1000 per year
Measures for farmland bird populations and arable plants (key bird species = skylark, yellowhammer, corn bunting, linnet, grey partridge)	
Seeded 'wildflower rich' 6m field margins @ £485/ha - suggest 1 ha	£485 per year
Wild bird seed mix plots @ £475/ha - suggest 4 ha	£1900 per year
Unharvested fertiliser free conservation headlands @£400/ha - suggest 3ha	£1200 per year
Cultivated fallow 6m strips for arable weed communities @£440/ha - suggest 1ha	£440 per year
Measures for education/permissive public access	
Refer to Section 2. Part 19: Education and training	
Permissive footpath access @£ 0.45/m per year (e.g a path of 500m in length)	£225 per year
Plus base payment @£350	£350 per year
Total income per year from HLS	Approx: £5 - 6000 per year*

The WCF are fully aware that, owing to the competitive nature of HLS, entry into the scheme is not guaranteed. Should the farm not be successful in securing an HLS agreement the farm will simply continue with an ELS and OELS agreement.

17) Staff

A) Working Farm Manager

Responsible to the board.

Objectives and tasks:

To have overall day-to-day responsibility for management of the Wye Community Farm.



Solely:

- Managing all agricultural enterprises on the farm.
- Working closely with, and assisting where necessary, the arable contractor.
- Managing farm staff and providing necessary cover and support (inc relief milking).

Jointly (with the board):

- Financial planning.
- Strategic decision-making.
- Input to other farm activity; educational work, agri-environment schemes etc.
- Developing added-value initiatives.
- Farm office.

(N.B. Accommodation in the village will be provided with this position if required).

b) Herdsman/ General farm worker

Responsible to the Farm Manager.

Objectives and tasks:

- To be responsible for all practical aspects of herd management; milking, feeding, herd health, etc.
- To manage calf rearing and herd replacements, and assist with other farming activity (including agri-environment measures) as appropriate.

Job adverts for the above two positions have been drafted, and specialist HR input obtained. The WCF has secured sufficient interim labour and technical support (including two relief milkers familiar with the College Farm) should the successful applicants not be in place by commencement. In any event, it is hoped that agreement could be reached with the landlord for an existing staff member to stay on for a short period to ensure a smooth transfer. As indicated in Para 13, our arable contractors are ready to take up early access should the tenancy be secured.

Members of the WCF, both paid and voluntary, will largely meet casual labour requirements, alongside training placements, 'WOOFERS' etc.

18) Partnership arrangements

Beyond the core farming enterprises as described in this business plan, the Wye Community Farm would hope to engage in partnership arrangements with local businesses, to create employment and increase the profitability of other businesses tenanted on the Wye Estate. To give some examples of initiatives to be explored:



- The Wooden Spoon Preserving Company are very keen to grow up to 3 Ha of soft fruit for their jams in collaboration with the Wye Community Farm. The Wooden Spoon are also very interested in the potential to expand retail sales from their existing shop, marketing WCF produce both to the general public and WCF members attending open days.
- If Ripple Farm Organics secure the tenancy of Lot 2, the Wye Community Farm will look to work closely with them in terms of promotion, distribution, and possibly crop rotation.
- A Wye resident (and former college farm employee) is keen to start a small goat meat enterprise, perhaps utilizing around 5 Ha and an otherwise redundant building.

19) Education and training

Providing education and training opportunities is a key objective of the WCF. The public consultation exercise revealed 'education of children on food, farming and countryside issues' to be the most frequently requested role for the Wye Community Farm. Reflecting this, key areas of activity will be:

- School visits. The WCF will be the only farm in East Kent with a dairy herd offering school visits. With additional educational opportunities such as the AONB /SSSI status, the architecture of Wye College and village, the agricultural museum at Brook (see letter of support) etc, the farm will be an attractive destination for schools. Close relationships will be built with local schools and educational facilities, tailoring educational activities to their needs and responding to the requirements of the national curriculum, 'Growing Schools' programme and the 'Year of Food and Farming' initiative. Subjects covered would include Geography, History (a collaborative programme with Agricultural Museum Brook), Drama, English, RE, Science, Maths, PSHE & Citizenship, PE, ICT and Art & Design. In addition to traditional teaching resources, full use will be made of the internet including webcams (parlour, lambing shed etc) and virtual farm walks.
- After-school club. An after-school club will allow local young people to learn relevant skills: animal husbandry, wildlife conservation etc. There will also be an extensive school holiday programme.
- Themed open days. Four times a year, a seasonal open day will be held for WCF members, which will encourage family participation and boost membership.
 - Spring: Lambing day.
 - Summer: Farm walk.
 - Autumn: Harvest festival.
 - Winter: Carols in the barn.
- Vocational training. It is planned to form close links with Hadlow College; see letter of support in Appendix 3.



An important note on access and traffic: The school visits will be via coach 2-3 times a week during term time. Other than the four open days a year for WCF members as outlined above, the farm yard will not be open to public access. For these four days, no parking will be provided at the farm yard (other than pre-booked for disabled etc) but instead it is hoped that an arrangement can be reached with the landlord whereby the extensive parking at Withersdane could be signposted.

20) Access and enjoyment

The public consultation exercise revealed a high desire for recreational access to the farm to be promoted. Footpaths will be maintained and enhanced, with interpretation boards explaining cropping and livestock enterprises. Themed farm walks, led by relevant experts from within the WCF membership, will offer an understanding of farming practices, wildlife, archaeology etc.

The potential to host relevant entertainment events will be fully exploited, as a means of boosting the local economy and increasing access to the countryside. We would hope, for example, to work with the landlord and the organisers of Wye Fayre, flying monkey limited, about their needs in terms of fields for camping etc. As an events and marketing company, flying monkey worked closely with several Wye residents on this year's Fayre, and is continuing to do so as it is interested in organising further events - such as classical concerts, music and art workshops, theatrical productions (including community theatre) and educational projects for local schools. Flying monkey has also offered free marketing and promotional support to Wye Community Farm.

21) Research

Over the last 100 years, the name of Wye College became synonymous with agricultural research of global importance. Were the Wye Community Farm to secure the tenancy, it is hoped that this work could be continued in some form through collaboration with the landlord. It would be a natural fit for Imperial College to make use of land which has been used for research for a century, and it is hoped that the potential for such collaborative work will be recognised. To give one example, the Wye Community Farm could work with ICL's climate change researchers on ways to reduce methane emissions from livestock. There is tremendous potential to conduct further research with a wide range of organisations covering agricultural and environmental issues - organic bodies, agrochemical firms, climate change panels - and such opportunities will be fully explored.



Section 3, Years 4 - 8

22) Summary

- Continuation of core farming enterprises as per years 1 - 3
- Expand educational work according to demand from partner organisations.
- Research introducing free-range pigs, for pork production for the meat box business.
- Consider small-scale biofuel production: on farm pressing of homegrown oil crops for use by farm vehicles - eg milk round - and partner organisations.
- Explore further novel cropping/added-value enterprises, as suggested by and drawing on the expertise of WCF members.



Section 4, Years 9 - 10

23) Summary

Fundamental review of farming operations, based on current performance and tenancy status.



Section 5: Miscellany

24) The rent

In addition to the rent offered, the Wye Community Farm proposal offers the following benefits and opportunities:

- If the WCF is successful in securing the tenancy of the Wye College Farm, the resultant initiatives and ancillary businesses could produce an economic yield for the landlord greater than the actual farm rent. The following are potential income streams to be explored through collaborative working between landlord and tenant:
 - i) Hire of teaching rooms, conference rooms and accommodation (Coldharbour, Withersdane) for school trips, visitors attending training days etc.
 - ii) Rent from new businesses starting up in Wye to add value to farm produce; cutting room, pack house, micro-brewery, bakery, craft workshops etc. For example, the redundant buildings at Amage Farm could be developed as a centre for small food businesses, producing a rental yield for the landlord greater than the farm rent.
- By virtue of its objectives and legal structure, the WCF will have access to a wide range of funding opportunities. By securing grants for infrastructure improvements, environmental enhancement, etc, the WCF can both relieve the landlord of obligations and add value to the estate. The value of this work to the landlord should rightly be factored in when assessing the value of the rent figure.
- It is hoped by the WCF that ICL will recognise the ways in which this proposal for the farm is in line with the educational obligations inherited upon merger with Wye College.

Leaving aside the educational, social and environmental merits of this tender, it has the potential to represent the most economically attractive option for the landlord. Recognising this, the Wye Community Farm would look forward positively to the rent review at year three, in the expectation that an agreement could be reached to the satisfaction of both tenant and landlord.

25) Business stability

A growing number of professionals - farmers, agricultural consultants, academics - are committing themselves to the WCF vision for the Wye College Farm. The expertise on hand to support the farm manager will be as good as that available to any farmer in the UK (see CV's in Para 28).

Whilst the concept of Community Supported Agriculture may be a new philosophy to many, the IPS legal structure is actually quite common within agriculture. Many successful farmer co-operatives are IPS in structure, and benefit from the stability and collective knowledge which comes with having a number of people having equal responsibility for the success of the enterprise.



Through use of an established agricultural contractor for all arable operations, the novel elements of the Wye Community Farm proposal are complemented by a strong track record of service delivery.

26) Wider considerations

The Wye Community Farm tender is not a 'normal' bid, yet the Wye College Farm is not a 'normal' farm. There will always be a need for a small number of farms to be committed to doing things differently, so that mainstream agriculture - and society at large - can benefit from the lessons learned. The Wye College Farm has been at the forefront of developments in food and farming for over 100 years, and the WCF proposal offers an opportunity to continue this tradition and address the key challenges of the 21st Century.

One third of man-made climate change can be attributed to how we feed ourselves; production, distribution, processing etc. The Wye Community Farm will put in place a wide range of initiatives to reduce food miles, limit emissions from farming practices, and educate the public on the central role of agriculture in the environmental debate.

With the entire farm being within the AONB, and some classified as a SSSI, the legal obligation and public expectation for high levels of stewardship will only increase. The WCF is uniquely placed - through its membership structure and contacts with environmental bodies - to ensure that these requirements are met and exceeded to the credit of both tenant and landowner.

Beyond the farming policies outlined in this business plan, the Wye Community Farm would also hope to explore the following possibilities:

- Renewable energy systems (PV, wind, biomass) to make the farm and dairy a pioneering example of 'carbon neutral' profitable food production
- Research into sustainable production and distribution systems, water conservation, anaerobic digestion, carbon sequestration.
- Further investment in added-value enterprises, as a means of creating employment and cutting food miles.
- Introduction of a wider range of enterprises requiring a longer payback period - vineyard, orchards, hops - to provide training in land-based skills, enhance biodiversity, further increase the self-sufficiency of the local community.

27) Finance

Appendix 2 contains the budgets for the core farming business.

Additionally, advantage will be taken of grant funding to add value to the facilities at the farm and to enhance the social, environmental and economic benefits that the farm will provide. The Rural Development Plan for England (RDPE) will come on-stream in Spring 2008 and due to the nature of its structure and its aims, the Wye Community Farm will be well placed to apply to the Mid-Kent LAG and for funds under the mainstream RDPE. This funding will be timed to initiate projects during the second year of the Farm's activity.



In addition to government funding there are a number of charitable foundations whose aims are in tune with those of the Wye Community Farm and to whom applications will be made for grants to fund particular social and environmental initiatives.

28) CV's

CV's of Wye Community Farm Limited board members here

Barnes, Wendy	BSc Hons Agriculture & Environment (Wye Collage) 11 years practical experience on large commercial mainly arable farm. 9 years corporate organisation of which 6 years as a manager Consultant, working in strategic planning Ashford Borough Council 1999-2000 Now have Three children. Currently Business Mentor Brockhill Park School for the past 5 years.
Bartley, Richard	After graduating from Wye (1993), Richard worked for FWAG and the Farm Business Survey. He now manages rural development projects. Before Wye, he was a farm manager for 8 years. He set up 4 diversification enterprises and chaired a NFU County Horticulture committee. In the 1980s as the Hoechst UK (Agriculture) crop protection specialist on fruit and hops, he worked on IPM field trials with pheromones.
Bertaglia, Dr Marco	PhD. He is a Research Associate at the University of Kent, Wye Campus. His current research includes developing and promoting alternative pest management strategies, by habitat manipulation (e.g. enhanced field margins) and the use of pheromones.
Boden, Richard	He is Founder (1989) and Managing Director of WyeCycle Ltd, a community waste project. Founder (1999) and Director of Wye Farmers Market Ltd.
Bouverie, Jasper	Radio and interactive producer who works for the BBC World Service. Previously he's worked as a freelance features writer and radio reporter specialising in environmental issues and has worked in Italy and Egypt as well as in the UK.
Clifford, Jamie	Wye College Graduate - Agriculture and the Environment (1998) Development Director Kent county Cricket Club Wye Parish Councillor Wye Resident
Cobb, Paul	MA, MSc, MIEEM, CEnv. Team Leader and Farm Conservation Adviser, Kent & Sussex Farming & Wildlife Advisory Group 23 years with FWAG in Kent, all of it based at Wye. FWAG works with landowners and managers on environmental projects and good practice.
Furey, Sean	BSc, MSc, FRGS, MCIWEM. Deputy Director of CPRE Kent since 2007. Previously with Environment Agency, Kent Area as a Water Resources hydrologist and a project manager for integrated water management in the Ashford growth area.
Furey, Tammy	BA, MSc. Youth project manager and web designer, working with disadvantaged young people with organisations such as Save the Children and the Children's Society. Tammy's background also includes Third World Development and Countryside Access/Footpath mapping. Tammy believes in the value of re-connecting young and old to the land upon which they live and the food they eat.
Higgins, Jeff	MBA (Kent Business School). He is a marketing expert and Managing Director of the Wooden Spoon Preserving Company Ltd. The company has been based in Wye for 30 years using artisan production methods and supplies many prestigious companies including Fortnum & Mason.
Honey, Richard	He qualified originally as a chartered surveyor but now practises as a barrister specialising in environmental law. He is an Ashford Borough councillor representing Brook and Hastingleigh
Jessel, George	Farmer and landowner, and is involved in several agricultural diversifications projects, lives in a neighbouring village with his wife and 2 children. He is currently chairman of the Kent County Agricultural Society



Little, Jim	BA. He has a background is in journalism and recently worked for CPRE Kent. As a farmer's son, he has always been interested in the issue of local food and the potential for using working farms as an educational resource for young people.
Potts, Graham	BSc in IT and works in a small manufacturing company in Whitstable where currently look after all aspects of there Data and telecommunications networks. Graham administers the WCF's membership database and give help & advice on all aspects of their IT requirements.
Reynolds, Chris	Studied at Wye College, followed by management of a local farming estate until mid 90's. Now run my own farm management business looking after land in the Lyminge area and agricultural contracting. Past Chair of Canterbury Farmers Club and Kent NFU. Current Chair of Kent Downs AONB
Terry, David	Graduate in Countryside Management and Rural Development from Wye College, with 12 years experience in Economic and Community Development work. This includes employment with: Kent Rural Community Council as Assistant Director Community Development, The Countryside Agency as Countryside Officer for Kent and Surrey, and currently employed by Maidstone Borough Council as the Strategic and Community Funding Officer. Prior to University worked in the private sector in banking and finance and for 5 years in the 'Producers Department' at the Milk Marketing Board Head Office. Extensive Knowledge in: Line Management, Project Management, Community Enabling, Community & Strategic Funding and Sustainable Living Initiatives. Outside of employment: a Trustee of the Queens Award winning Kent and Medway Walking Bus, Chairman of Fordwich Allotment Association and Board member of a new sustainable living initiative 'Building 4 the Future'
Tuson, Dan.	MSc Land Resource Management (Silsoe College). Agri-environment Adviser for Natural England with seven years experience of advising farmers and landowners on Environmental Stewardship Schemes.
Ward, Phil	MA Hons (Edinburgh), Research Funding Officer, University of Kent. Experience in identifying grants, dealing with a range of interested parties, coordinating bids, and securing funding for projects.

Farm business management, finance and technical advisors to the WCF:

Knight, David	BSc Hons (Ag) MSc (Ag Econ). Farm Business Management Consultant with experience throughout the UK & Ireland (from 1970). Finance Director Weald Granary Ltd (60,000 tonne co-operative grainstore) (from 1997). Chairman Apple Growers Association Ltd (fruit storage co-operative) (from 2006). Director SGT Ltd (fruit marketing co-operative) (from 2007). Past Chairman of British Institute of Agricultural Consultants (1987). Past Chairman of Kent NFU (2000-2001) Farmer on 110 acres top fruit farm at Pembury, Kent (since 1981)
Leaver, David	Former Professor of Agriculture at Wye College. Now returning to the Wye area after retiring as Principal of the Royal Agricultural College, Cirencester.
Makowiecki, Ben	BSc (Hons) Agricultural Business Management - Wye College On graduating from Wye, Ben moved to East Anglia and worked as an Agricultural Business Consultant for 7 years. He joined a major high street bank in 2005 as Agriculture Banking Manager for Essex and Hertfordshire. He is also a member of the board of the East Anglia branch of the Institute of Agriculture Managers (IAgM).
Myram, Colin	Wye graduate, who was Technical Director of Crop Care Chemicals and Agrovista UK Ltd until 2001 when he set up his agricultural consultancy business, C.M.Consulting (UK) Ltd.