

# FARM@DMAT NEWSLETTER

Volume 1 : Edition 1 : March 2024



Welcome to the inaugural edition of the FARM@DMAT newsletter. This publication is intended to keep the DMAT family and all partners/ stakeholders updated with progress of the exciting FARM@DMAT project. Spring is sprung, the grass is riz and the vernal equinox has finally been and gone releasing us from the bleakness of Winter and giving us assurance that we can all finally look towards longer, balmier and hopefully less damp days.



With this in mind , Dartmoor Multi Academy Trust is thrilled to confirm that we are in the process of signing a lease agreement with Okehampton United Charities Trust to rent 13 acres of land immediately adjacent to Okehampton College.

DMAT is proud to be at the heart of many special communities in West Devon and Torridge. None is more special that Okehampton. A wonderful, vibrant and historic market town sitting at the gateway to the beauty and possibility that is Dartmoor .

As an organisation we recognise, respect and want to engage actively with and support our rural communities from whom we know we have so much to learn that is worthwhile. Against this background we are actively seeking to connect our children with their rural heritage and to play a small role in promoting and championing land based learning and the overall benefits of nature and natural environments on wellbeing.

## The FARM@TEAM



FARM@ DMAT sits under the umbrella of the Trust's Social Justice Board. The board is committed to ensuring that every child, young person and adult can be the best version of themselves that they can be as a result of equitable access to formal and informal developmental and reflective opportunities. The team leans into a drive for relentless optimism on behalf of every member of the Trust Community and beyond. The project is led by Barbara Manning with the assistance of our Project Coordinator Beth Hamer.

The Team is supported by colleagues from within the Trust who oversee our estates work and experts from the rural, agricultural and land based partners.



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Okehampton United Charity have ensured the long term ownership of all the land along the East Ockment Valley – including thirteen acres of land where we endeavour to nurture the soils and work collectively to inspire, engage and celebrate Okehampton.

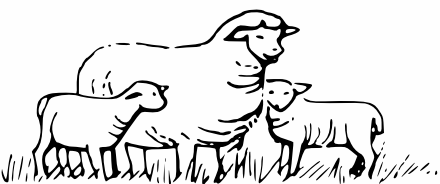
The COVID-19 pandemic, economic crisis, rising food and energy costs, childhood obesity, isolation and unprecedented mental health referrals are culminating in an extraordinary set of challenges within society.

Schools have an even more vital role in ensuring that our society, and most especially the next generation, can heal and grow.

Dartmoor Multi Academy Trust is committed to working within our communities to deepen and broaden connection; fostering resilience through people and place.

DMAT is committed to building a future that engages all generations, where skills can be shared, fresh air, abundance of produce, connection to others and purpose are constant. The Trust intends to deliver projects that directly answer the real concerns of the community and benefits the conservation of our environment.

The School Farm will develop links between different subjects, accredited courses, connections with farmers, apprenticeships and will greatly enhance learning, specifically from Reception – Key Stage 4. In turn, School Farm will provide the opportunity to engage in healthy lifestyle practices, building resilience for generations to come, providing real solutions for real people and wildlife.



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**Project coordinator, Beth Hamer**

shares the long term vision for the FARM@DMAT.

In the short term as we scope how to manage the land medium and longer term to achieve our goals, the project members are working on 4 key priorities:

1

1. Developing growing spaces in all 19 of our schools, so that they can take their learning from the farm back to their settings.

2

2. An alternative complementary learning offer for some of our most vulnerable and underserved young people.

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3. A broader curriculum offer to augment the existing offer.

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4. Developing some support with emotional and mental health and well being through the Eco Hub base at Okehampton College.

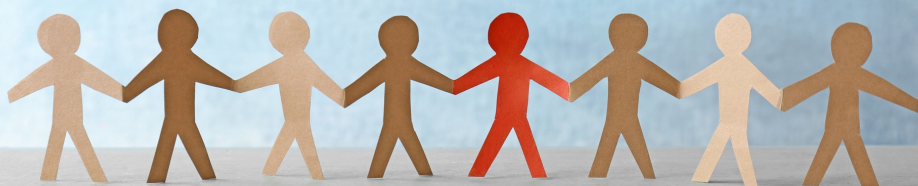
## Volunteers Needed



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FARM@ DMAT is keen to work with volunteers from across the Trust catchment and beyond. Please do get in touch if you would like to offer your time, expertise, enthusiasm and/or wisdom.

...Everyone in our Trust



## Volunteer Opportunities at Dartmoor Multi Academy Trust

### Could you spare an hour a week as a...

- befriender?
- school advocate?
- gardener?
- governor?
- reader?
- mentor?
- fundraiser?
- skills sharer?

or other - we are open to suggestions!



Please scan the QR code to complete the brief enquiry form or email: [community@dmatschools.org.uk](mailto:community@dmatschools.org.uk) with any queries or to register your interest.

We would love to hear from you!

