

HEALTH AND WELLBEING RESEARCH REPORT

April 2019



The Worshipful Company of Farmers

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PREFACE FOR THE HEALTH & WELLBEING REPORT

Complexity, coupled with the constant level of risk and relentless uncertainty, takes a tremendous toll on the lives of those who work tirelessly to grow our food on a sustainable basis.

Recognising this, in my year as Master of the Worshipful Company of Farmers (2016/17), I initiated a meeting of a wide range of Rural Support Groups to understand in greater detail the key issues and challenges faced across the industry. What became abundantly clear at our first meeting of the Forum was that the issues of 'Health & Wellbeing' within agriculture were not generally understood within the wider industry and that, consequently, the help that could be offered was heavily constrained by a lack of funding.

At the same time, I had been personally touched by my conversations with students on our Leadership and Management courses, which revealed that high levels of mental suffering and stress were universal. It was clear to me that we were only teaching one half of the equation necessary for success. As life becomes more complex, so does the need to consciously cultivate physical, mental and emotional resilience – and this, to me, was where we were falling short throughout the industry.

From our initial meeting, there was unanimous support for the Forum to continue. Together, there was an opportunity, not only to share best practice but to raise greater awareness of the key issues ahead of the looming challenges in the post-Brexit era of UK agriculture.

Discussions with Farmers' Weekly led to their recent Fit2Farm campaign. This has provided great editorial, demonstrating the many routes to resilience. It has enabled people to understand how to get the right balance in their lives and fostered healthier thinking to farm well.

In June last year, the Farmers' Livery Company agreed to commission this report to enhance our understanding of the depth and scale of issues surrounding health and wellbeing in farming communities to provide recommendations to the Forum to inform their next steps.

This report, undertaken by Rose Regeneration, together with the University of Lincoln, has achieved just that – with clarity of research and a consequent deep understanding of the issues, they have drawn together clear recommendations for the future.

However, this is just the first step and I aspire to see not just greater recognition of the issues and a more holistic approach to support, but a much wider understanding of the beneficial social impact that existing support groups are providing. Should we eventually see a widely supported national initiative, similar to Farm Strong in New Zealand, I believe this would be a tremendous step forward for our industry.

Philip Wynn
April 2019

1. INTRODUCTION

In September 2018, Rose Regeneration and the University of Lincoln were commissioned to undertake research into the health and wellbeing of farmers and farming communities by The Worshipful Company of Farmers (WCF).

This section of the report provides some background to the work and the research questions that were set.

1.1 The background to the research

In 2017 Philip Wynn, then Master of the Worshipful Company of Farmers, initiated a meeting of rural support groups to understand in more detail the opportunities and challenges they faced and how they might share practices in the future. From this initial engagement, it became clear that: (1) the issue of health and wellbeing in agriculture was not well understood within the wider industry; (2) there were opportunities to intervene to support people before they were overwhelmed by their condition, particularly younger people; and (3) the resourcing and funding of support groups needed to be considered.

The WCF established a Health and Wellbeing Forum. This brings together support groups at regular intervals to share best practice, raise awareness of health and wellbeing issues, and collaborate to promote 'good health and wellbeing' in every rural community.

The WCF also informed and supported Farmers' Weekly with its 'Fit2Farm' campaign. Under the strapline, healthy farm businesses need healthy farmers, the campaign not only highlights the importance of health and wellbeing among farmers, but also the ways in which it can be improved.

This piece of research was commissioned to build on these existing activities. It is intended to enhance the WCF and Forum's understanding of the depth and scale of the issues surrounding health and wellbeing in farming communities.



1.2 The research questions

14 research questions were set by the WCF. These split into two areas: *context* and *process*.

Context

1. Over the past 10 years is there any clear evidence that issues relating to health and wellbeing in agriculture have:
 - Worsened
 - Improved
 - Remained the same
2. Is there any clear evidence that in the next 5 years these issues will:
 - Improve
 - Worsen
 - Remain the same
3. Is there any evidence that the causes of problems relating to mental health and wellbeing have changed over the past 10 years, and if so, what are those changes?
4. In terms of age, is there an increasing incidence of issues among young people? Where do they go for help?
5. Are there any specific sectors within farming that have a higher incidence of mental health issues?
6. Are there any noticeable regional differences regarding mental health and wellbeing issues within the UK agricultural workforce, and if so, is there any indication as to the causes of those differences?
7. Are there any areas of need or geographical areas that are not covered by the current support provisions?

Process

8. Are there ways in which the various local, regional and national support organisations could work more efficiently and effectively?
9. What resources are needed to facilitate this?
10. What part can the existing organisations play?
11. Is national coordination essential and if so, how?
12. How relevant is the Farm Strong Network in NZ to the UK position?
13. How can we get greater recognition of the issues?
14. What are the key priorities for the group set up by the WCF?

1.3 The purpose of this report

This document presents the findings of the research along with some conclusions and suggested next steps.

The report is divided into three main sections:

- I. **What we did:** this section considers the approach we took to answer the 14 research questions.
- II. **What we found:** this section describes the key findings of the research.
- III. **Where next?:** This section looks at how the WCF and support groups might want to use these key findings.

2. WHAT WE DID

To respond to the 14 research questions we have undertaken a ‘mixed methods’ approach: collecting and analysing quantitative information (e.g. data, surveys) and qualitative information (e.g. interviews, group work).

This section of the report summarises the different ways we have gathered information to answer the research questions.

2.1 Documents

A Rapid Evidence Assessment (REA) is a short and systematic review of literature available on a given topic.

We undertook a REA to collate a range of journal articles, reports, discussion papers and think pieces from organisations and professionals involved in issues related to health and wellbeing in farmers and farming communities. We sourced these documents using:

- Academic databases (e.g. EBSCO, Emerald, Google Scholar, Taylor & Francis)
- Internet search engines (i.e. Google)
- Relevant charities and consultancies (e.g. RABI, Farm Community Network, Prince’s Countryside Fund)
- Relevant professional and technical bodies such as The National Farmers’ Union,
- Tenant Farmers Association and National Federation of Young Farmers Clubs

31 documents have been collated as part of the review. A table was produced summarising information about each document, including the author, title, source, key search terms used, its relevance to the research, and the geography it covers.

The main findings of the review were collated into a summary table. This provides information about:

- The current picture of mental health in farming communities
- Any factors that make farming communities more susceptible to poor health and wellbeing compared to the general population
- The wider pressures affecting farmers and UK farming
- Any factors affecting the health and wellbeing of rural communities more generally
- Examples of health support initiatives - that support farmers, farming communities and/or rural communities
- Examples of initiatives (from the UK and elsewhere) of farmer networks / support groups which deliver health and wellbeing outcomes (e.g. The Farmstrong Network in New Zealand)

A list of the documents reviewed and the summary table of main findings against each of these bullet points can be found in Appendix A.

2.2 Data

A range of statistics was used to develop an understanding of the current picture of mental and physical wellbeing among farmers and related occupations. These sources included:

- Office for National Statistics: data on suicide by occupation in England (2011-2015) and among selected agricultural occupations (2001-2015).
- Health and Safety Executive: data on work-related ill health and workplace injuries for agriculture, forestry and fishing (2018).
- The Fit2Farm Survey, undertaken by Farmers Weekly, which received responses from 875 farmers, farm managers and farm workers on issues related to health and wellbeing (2018).

We have also worked with data analysts at Public Health England (PHE) to identify the most appropriate datasets they hold to support this research. This includes looking at established and accessible data sources such as 'local data' and 'fingertips'.

2.3 People

We arranged a series of telephone interviews and face-to-face discussions with representatives from the national, regional and local support groups.

We took the 14 research questions and developed 'Key Lines of Enquiry' (KLoE). This ensured we were consistent in the questions we asked each person and that we focused on the things that mattered most to the research.

As our starting point, we looked at the support groups listed in the National Rural Support Groups Directory compiled and sponsored by The YANA Project (YANA, 2018). From this we identified a list of 50 support groups that provide assistance to farmers and farming communities, particularly in the context of health and wellbeing, throughout the UK.

We contacted all of the groups on the list and interviewed 25 people working in 22 different organisations. From the interviews, a series of themes emerged around:

- The health and wellbeing issues facing farmers, farming families and farming communities – and how these have played out over the last 10 years, and whether these issues will improve, worsen or remain the same
- Understanding the activities that support groups undertake (directly and indirectly) to support farmers and farming families – and the opportunities and challenges that groups face in delivering these activities
- How the help provided by farmer support groups aligns to mainstream provision
- Whether there are any areas of need or geographical areas that are not covered by current farmer support groups

Appendix B contains a list of interviewees and a copy of the discussion guides.

2.4 Testing our findings

In October 2018 the WCF convened a meeting of the WCF Forum and support groups at the University of Lincoln. The purpose of the session was to get views and feedback from those present about the research undertaken so far. This session included discussions around:

- How can we get greater recognition of the issues and the role support groups play?
- What information and data do support groups collect or need to collect?
- Are there any gaps in support – and how might these be filled?
- Where next?

A summary of the discussion that took place at the session can be found in Appendix C.

3. WHAT WE FOUND

In this section of the report we present the *findings of the research*.

These are based upon reviewing all of the information we collected as part of our mixed methods approach.

Our findings are arranged under 4 headings:

1. Health and wellbeing in farming: the current picture
2. Some of the factors that impact upon farmer health and wellbeing
3. The role played by support groups
4. Some examples of what works from elsewhere

3.1 Health and wellbeing in farming: the current picture

This section draws together some findings of recent surveys and data to understand the current picture of physical and mental health among farmers. A key finding is that farmers appear to be more positive about their physical rather than their mental health. For example, the Farmers Weekly Fit2Farm Survey suggests that the majority (64%) of farmers believe they are in good shape physically, though fewer (55%) feel the same about their mental health (Tasker, 2018). There are some ***disparities in the lifestyles and self-reported health of those in different occupational roles involved in farming***. Farm owners are least likely to take days off or holidays, and are most likely to report poor physical health. ***The majority of farm owners, 60%, do not exercise outside the farm***. By contrast, ***farm workers report good physical health but are more likely to report poor mental health***. Farm workers are most likely to smoke, to drink regularly, and eat no fruit or vegetables. They are also most likely of all the farming occupations to have had an accident in the last 12 months.

There are also differences in the self-reported health of young people (under 24) involved in farming compared with older age groups. For example, while ***two thirds of young people report good physical health, they are most likely to say that their mental health is 'about average'***, which may suggest a greater awareness of mental health issues among this group. Just a quarter of young people involved in farming report getting enough sleep all or most of the time compared with more than half of those aged 55 and over, and they are the age group that is most likely to show interest in advice on managing tiredness. However, data from the HSE (2018a) also suggests that younger farmers are more likely to feel useful and optimistic about the future compared with those aged 55 and over.

Farms are risky working environments. The ***agricultural sector accounts for around 20% of workplace deaths each year***, despite accounting for just over 1% of the workforce (HSE & Ipsos MORI, 2017). While other sectors have experienced a decline in accidents and illnesses over recent decades, agriculture has not seen significant improvement.

Those involved in agricultural occupations have a ***higher rate of work-related ill-health*** than other sectors, and ***twice the rate of work-related musculoskeletal disorders*** (HSE, 2018). This is partly related to the physical nature of farming, but also to ***high rates of accidents***. The most frequent causes of non-fatal injuries are trips or falls, being injured by an animal, and falls from a height (HSE, 2018).



Research by HSE & Ipsos MORI (2017) shows that, while **farmers are knowledgeable about the basics of working safely, they still undertake risky behaviour**. **Dairy and livestock farmers are identified as most likely to undertake risks**, such as working when sick or tired, due to time pressures. The safety messages that were identified as most likely to work were those that **made farmers stop and think** by including hard-hitting examples, and those **linking regular farming activities to severe consequences**.

Mental ill-health has long been regarded as a prevalent issue among farmers. One indicator of mental ill-health is suicide, and a high suicide rates have been reported among farmers in both the UK and elsewhere (Naik, 2016). However, the latest data shows that **the overall suicide rate among farming occupations has declined**, from 53 deaths in 2001 to 37 in 2015 (ONS, 2017a). This has not been a steady decline; the Foot and Mouth crisis of 2001 may have been a factor in higher rates earlier in the century, and suicide rates increased in 2008 where the global recession may have been a factor. The net decline over the period mirrors the trend for all suicides across England and Wales, which have fallen by 8% (ONS, 2017b).

The suicide rate for farmers is now around the average for all occupations. However, it **remains high for certain farming jobs**. This is the case for farm workers, for whom the suicide rate is twice the average for all occupations (ONS, 2016). For those involved in agricultural

and fishing trades, a category that includes game-keepers and foresters, the rate is more than three times the average for all occupations (ONS, 2016). ***This suggests the benefit of a nuanced approach to provision of support which needs to be promoted to all farm and land-based occupations, rather than just "farmers" as a generic grouping.***

There are a number of factors that may affect the suicide rate among farming occupations, some of which may be incidental rather than integral to farming. For example, ***suicide rates are shown to be higher among males*** than females (ONS 2017b), and farming jobs are more typically occupied by men. The ***highest rates of suicide tend to be among occupations categorised in the statistics (but often not in practical terms) as "low-skilled"***, such as farm workers, where low pay, poor job security, and less control over working patterns are thought to increase the risk (Milner et al, 2013). Studies have also shown that ***having easy access to a method of suicide increases the risk*** (Skegg, 2010). The most common methods of suicide are hanging and poisoning (ONS, 2016), and farmers are more likely to have access to firearms compared with other occupations.

Limitations in the data prevent a deep understanding of suicide among farmers. It is not possible, using publicly available data, to identify suicides in farm occupations by particular age groups or by geographical area. ***There is also a data lag associated with official suicide statistics.*** The latest data for suicide by occupation is for 2015, which is significant given the rapid pace of change within the UK farming sector. Stakeholders suggest that there may also be ***underreporting of suicide among farming occupations.*** The occupations of those who have died by suicide are not always recorded, and those who work as part-time farmers are not always recorded as farmers in the statistics. Where there is doubt about the cause of death, some suicides can be recorded as accidents. Statistics on suicide by occupation only includes those up to the age of 65, meaning that farmers who continue working beyond traditional retirement age are not included in the data.

Data on other indicators of mental health, such as hospital admissions for self-harm, or alcohol abuse, is available through Public Health England. However, it is not currently possible to isolate this data for farming occupations and communities.

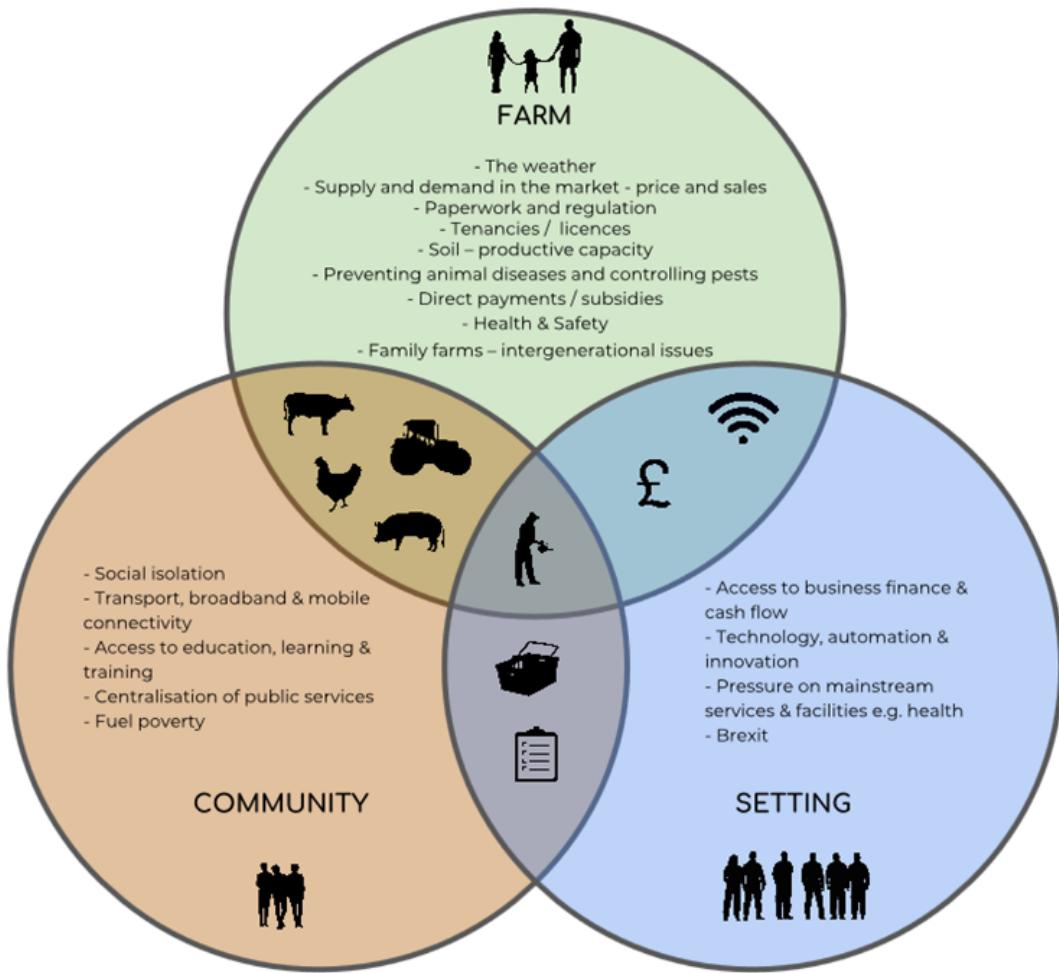
Data on farmers' mental wellbeing is collected at a local level by farm support organisations. For example, these organisations mention use to tools such as the Mental Wellbeing Ladder, the Mindfulness Measurement Index™ (MMI) and the Edinburgh Warwick Scale to assess levels of mental health and wellbeing. Subject to comparability of datasets, ***this data could be used to create a more sophisticated picture of mental wellbeing among farming communities.***

Some national bodies are more engaged with this agenda in the UK than others. In our view, Scotland has made differentially positive strides in this context. Following research by Scotland's Rural College (SRUC) and the mental health charity, Support in Mind Scotland, a forum of organisational members has been established. Membership is at 69 (January 2019) and includes membership organisations from the public sector, third sector, private sector, research institutes and Government. Amongst its work, the Forum is raising awareness of mental health through the various channels of its membership, working with Government Departments of Rural Communities, Mental Health and Social Security, and NHS to inform policy, encouraging partnership working of its members to tackle mental health in rural areas, and encouraging membership organisations to mental health first aid train staff and volunteers, building resilience within communities.

The National Rural Mental Health Forum is part of the Scottish Government's Mental Health Strategy 2017-2027.

3.2 Some of the factors that impact upon farmer health and wellbeing

The following diagram summarises some of the key factors that affect health and wellbeing among farmers.



Some of the factors listed in the diagram are specific to **farming**. These include **physical factors** such as the weather, climate and soil quality; **social and cultural** such as whether the farmer is an owner, occupier or tenant, and **economic** such as supply and demand in the market (prices) and direct payments (subsidies). Some farmers combine working on their own farms with seasonal contract work, and the seasonality of farm work combined with weather conditions can impact on health and wellbeing.

"The weather this year has had significant implications, because farming works around the weather, so this year has been challenging. We've had a drought, and forage stocks are a lot lower than usual. Everybody is going to be struggling towards the end of winter, and worrying how they are going to feed livestock. It's expensive and stressful."

"The biggest problems are unrelenting pressures, downwards on price, and upwards on cost of materials. There is a sense that 'our product is not valued', that is hard to take. Farmers take a huge amount of the risk, whereas the buyer has minimal risk."

A number of academics, organisations and charities have identified a series of **economic or business factors** that have affected the farming sector over the last 10 years. These include declining farm gate prices (Anderson, 2016), changing weather patterns, animal diseases, and

the burden created by the large number of regulatory bodies (Tenant Farmers Association, 2018). It is the combination of these factors that lead ***farm incomes to vary***, with some farmers continuing to operate while ***making a loss*** (Anderson, 2017) and relying upon ***credit*** to keep their farm business going (Prince's Countryside Fund, 2017). Others diversify their activities to generate income and / or require an off-farm income.

According to data from the Farm Business Survey, the average level of ***liabilities [debt]*** across all farms in England was £202,100 – with 13% of farms having liabilities of at least £400,000 and 28% with liabilities of less than £10,000. Specialist pig and poultry (£363,100), dairy (£360,100) and general cropping (£301,300) farms had the highest average liabilities, and grazing livestock and LFA Lowland have the lowest average liabilities, £83,400 and £88,200 respectively. Liabilities increased with farm size – both per farm and per hectare: from part-time farms (£970 per ha) to very large farms (£1,960 per ha) (see Defra, 2018b).

"Finance is a key issue. A lot of the people we deal with are those whom Theresa May described as 'just about making it'. I think we are on a downward trend. The type of debt we see now is different. If you went back 10 years it would be more consumer related debt. Now people have an income deficit, rather than they are spending beyond their means."

"From a farmer perspective, banks are not as supportive. Before 2008 it had been easy to get credit and loans, but that has now dried up and is harder. Banks treat farmers as businesses and want the money back... From a farmer perspective there's shame and embarrassment about money issues – we notice particularly in farming communities that this is very strong as farmers and farming families want to be seen as successful. A lot of people that come to us are really only living on farm payments (subsidy) and tax credits and are not making any profit whatsoever year on year; nil profit."



Farmers work on average 65 hours per week, 11% never take holiday and 10% never take part in off-farm activities. 40% want a better work-life balance (Tasker, 2018). The impact of these factors has led to a reduction in the number of farms, an increase in farm debt and the number of loss-making farms, and a reduction in the number of farms where farming is not the primary income.

It is the unpredictability of these factors as 'stressors' that affect many farmers and growers (Naik, 2017). The main difference between profitable and non-profitable farms has been found to be due to decisions made by the farmer; with less than 5% related to geographic factors, such as soil and climate (AHDB, 2018).

"Farming is unique in its exposure to stressors. A lot of families aren't making much money from farming, and farms are often small family businesses. They don't have a HR department to deal with red tape and paperwork and things like that."

"There is the increasing rush to industrialisation, where if you don't have the latest tractor or the biggest milking parlour, your costs are higher than the chap down the road who does. So farmers are very 'leveraged' in terms of debt, far more so than they used to be."

There are also social and cultural factors that affect health and wellbeing behaviours in farmers. In general, **stoic attitudes** may make it more likely for people living and working in rural communities to deny health problems or postpone seeking medical or associated services until it is economically necessary (Kilpatrick et al, 2012).

"There's a degree of resilience which leads them not to seek help until things reach an acute level."

"Farmers often neglect this [health]... they're reluctant to go to the doctor; they're concerned about their work and being able to afford someone to help them if they need to take time off."

"There are community specific issues, i.e. presentation and late presentation of issues. Previous research found the issue was not where the hospital was located but the delay, particularly in farming communities, in accessing the GP early. Farmers and farm workers present much later with health issues."

"Lack of anonymity is a key issue for people seeking help. Research suggests people want to be in their own communities and not needing to travel long distances."

The pressure of maintaining the legacy of the family farm, combined with social and physical isolation, living in a close-knit community and stigma, means people are reluctant to come forward and seek help.

"Some people are being coerced in one form or another by a controlling person in their household... They have poor coping strategies because they are being controlled by someone else's behaviour."

In terms of **gender**, male farmers are often conditioned to believe that they need to be tough and self-reliant, which leads to a reluctance in admitting health problems or seeking support (Naik, 2017). The contribution of women within farming as a whole is often seen as overlooked – from their skills and expertise in understanding the farm business to the generation of off-farm income and supporting their family and community to cope during difficult times.

"Women are the linchpin in farm businesses. Many women have got an off-farm income and this has been a positive for them but may have caused some issues back home. Women are at the centre of farming and they need supporting. Without them the job would really be on the floor."

"In the year after Foot and Mouth the women that held the farm together and had to be strong crumbled."

In terms of family farms, succession planning and the pressure to retain the farm within the family can put extra stress on farmers to continue. It is estimated that fewer than 40% of family farms have succession plans in place (Prince's Countryside Fund, 2017). Similarly, if a member of a farming family is absent due to injury, ill health or other circumstances, this leads to pressure on the household / farm business. Helping **young people** to enter, succeed (whether from a farming background or not) and / or exit the industry are seen as important.

"Farmers are very reluctant to retire. Young farmers in their 20s are coming home from college to a small family farm where their dad is in his 50s and probably not going to retire for another 20 years, and the farm isn't big enough for two incomes, when it used to be possible. And then there is the opposite problem, where some farms have no natural successors. There are challenges for young people coming into farming; it's not viable the way it used to be."

"Young farmers are a priority in relation to intervention. There is a crisis coming in terms of the next generation of farmers. It is really important to think about how to engage with the next generation – a much younger focus on training and development for individuals is really important."

"If the farmer or anyone in the farmer's family, be it them or their spouse, is ill, if for example a son is ill, that removes a pair of hands from the farm, and the farmer has to do his work as well."

Farmers are **socially isolated**; they work long hours, often alone, in remote places. This reduces opportunities for social interaction, which can lead to loneliness and poor mental health (Skerratt, 2018).

"Isolation, time pressures, upbringing... people are "locked in" to their own worlds, uncertainty and not being able to plan ahead."

"If you're living in the middle of nowhere, your connection to other people can be very intermittent and... if you are isolated, it all just implodes on you."

"Their level of isolation and the uncertainty of things like Brexit and other factors beyond their control, such as the poor weather this year, TB outbreaks... and the impact of that."

Many rural areas have seen **a reduction in services** over the last 10 years (e.g. the withdrawal of some public services, bank branch and post office closures) and this is regarded as contributing to a downward spiral in health and wellbeing among rural residents (Skerratt, 2018). At the same time, organisations and bodies that support rural communities on issues such as health [NHS], care [Local Authorities] , welfare and debt [Citizens Advice], are increasingly beset with enquiries and referrals.

"There are gaps in rural service provision... mobile opticians, mobile dentist, mobile chiropody etc."

Looking ahead, approaches to farming which have been shaped by the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) for 45 years are shifting to a new domestic policy agenda. The introduction of a new Environmental Land Management System (2019) and the Agriculture Bill sets out how farmers will be paid for environmental and public goods as the UK leaves the European Union. The effects of **Brexit are uncertain**, but, for some farmers, may include: a reduction in farm payments, increases in trading costs (AHDB, 2017a), a reduction in the availability of migrant labour and loss of farm income, particularly for farms involved in cereals, and upland beef and sheep (AHDB, 2017a, 2017b). Different Brexit scenarios will have very different impacts on the financial health of farm businesses (NFU, 2018).

"I worry about changes with things like Brexit. Even when we know what will happen, we don't know what the knock-on effects will be in farming and the food supply chain. That gives great cause for concern and might cause significant pain in the near future. The worry is that things could get a lot worse before they get better."

This research has found these factors affect farmer health and wellbeing in five main ways:

1. Farmers have a unique set of stressors – many beyond their control – and it is the combination of one or all of these that impacts on their health and wellbeing.

"With most farmers it's a build-up of stressors, with issues on top of issues. Often there is also burn-out, with the farmer never taking a break from the farm."

"Farming is like medicine, teaching and other highly stressed professions, but despite these factors – beyond the farmer's control... what is their resilience? If they can't do anything about it they need to let it go and not think about it more and more so it affects their mental and physical health."

2. These stressors can affect all types of farmer, including younger farmers and all aspects of the farming industry. While some of the farm specific factors could be separated into 'management pressures' and 'operational pressures', all farmers can be impacted by them.

"It's not just impoverished farmers that suffer – any farmer who sees his farm isn't profitable."

"The smaller the farm the more challenged – but bigger farms can be affected."

"There are different stresses on someone struggling with a 150 acre farm than if you own and run an estate with a number of different stakeholders involved, but when you bring it together, it adds up to the same thing – it's all building pressure."

"You would expect small scale farmers to face greater challenges as they are most impacted by prices and closer to the farm business. But stress affects all types of farmer and all sectors and this requires behaviour change as some farmers think 'this won't happen to me.'"

3. These stressors affect the physical, mental and emotional health and wellbeing of farmers.

Stress is common – with tiredness and fatigue contributing to farm accidents. 1 in 5 farmers responding to a Farmers Weekly survey revealed they have been involved in a work-related accident within the past 12 months (Tasker, 2018). Almost two thirds of respondents believed they were in good shape physically (64%) but the number is lower (55%) when it comes to how they feel mentally.

"Accidents don't just happen; they happen because farmers aren't paying attention... because they are preoccupied and have something else on their mind."

"Stress affects all farming sectors... stress can lead to accidents and injuries."

"In more complex cases, where farmers have six, seven problems, some that they have perhaps ignored and it has compounded and got on top of them, whether it be bereavement, financial problems, animal welfare... This also tends to exacerbate what I refer to as 'acquired mental health issues', where anxiety can build about these things and lead to depression."

"Farmers and farm workers have the means to take their own lives... they work long hours in certain seasons and find it difficult to access healthcare at a time to suit them."

4. The prevalence and impact of these stressors on a farmer's health and wellbeing depends on **both the severity of the problem and the ability of the farmer to cope**.

"It's the way things build up; it's the smallest thing that breaks the camel's back (e.g. bereavement, debt issues or one day the tractor breaks down). All farmers are equally susceptible to pressures and stress – it's about their resilience and ability to cope that's different."

"It's not what's going on around you that causes stress, it's what you think is going on around you."

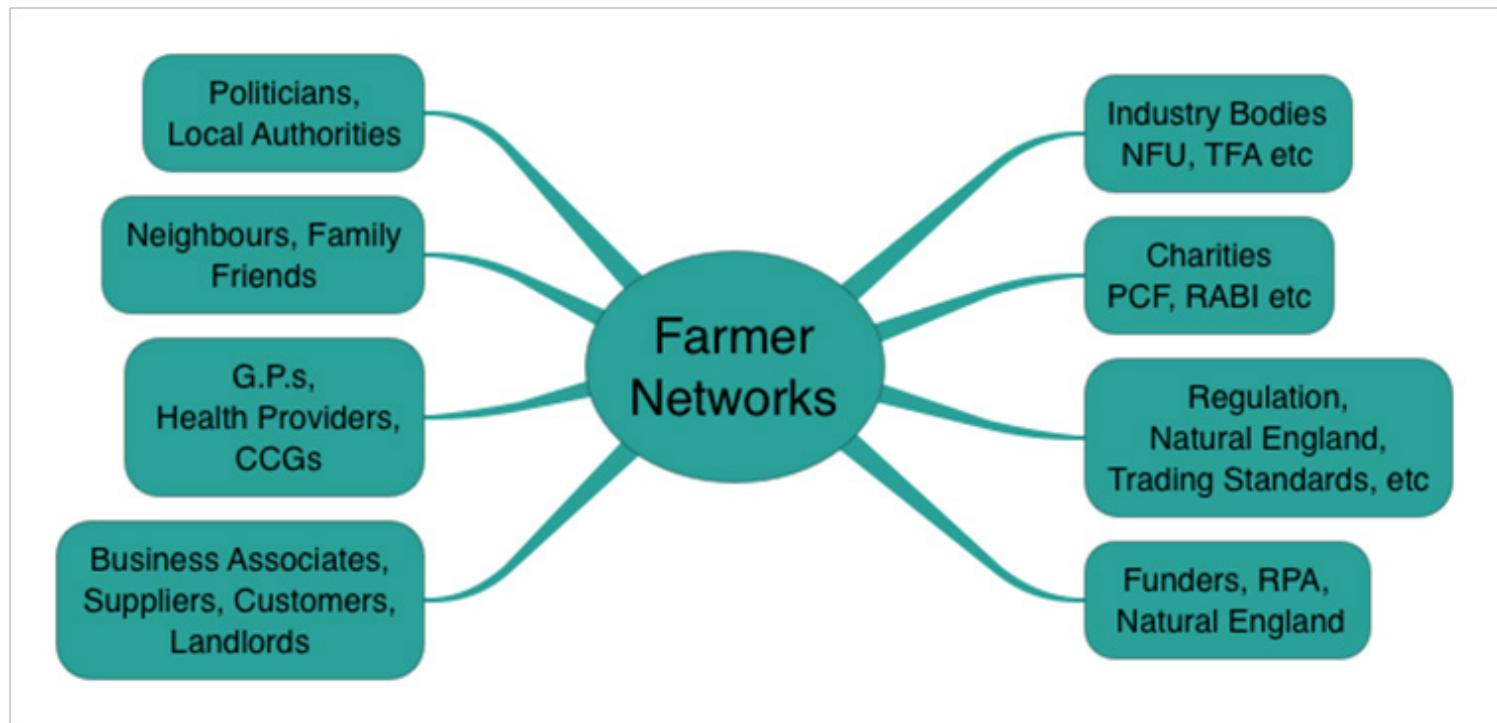
5. While farmers feel under pressure, there has been a shift over the last 5-10 years to **'opening up' to talk** about issues / stressors, seeking support and wanting to improve their health and wellbeing. Farmers Weekly Fit2Farm campaign found some 40% of farmers that responded to a survey wanted to know more about **ways of balancing work, family and time off** (Tasker, 2018).

"I get the impression that the stresses have got worse, although the industry is trying to talk about them more."

"The next big challenge we face is not using or changing the phrase 'mental health' because the presumption here is that we're talking about mental illness rather than health, care and wellbeing. Tackling mental health often comes at crisis point, yet we need a more upstream approach to help farmers manage their mental health while they are mentally well. There is also a stigma that farmers aren't interested in personal development and understanding their mind and emotions more, when really they are."

3.3 The role played by support groups

The following diagram shows the operating environment within which Farmer Networks operate and the scope for enhancing connections between these groupings (at the more local level on the left and the more national level on the right) to strengthen the connections and ultimately the impact of the organisations concerned.



"The USP of local groups: we're flexible, adaptable, have local knowledge, and are trusted and confided in by the farming community. We are uncomplicated and have a complementary offer and relationship with regional and national organisations."

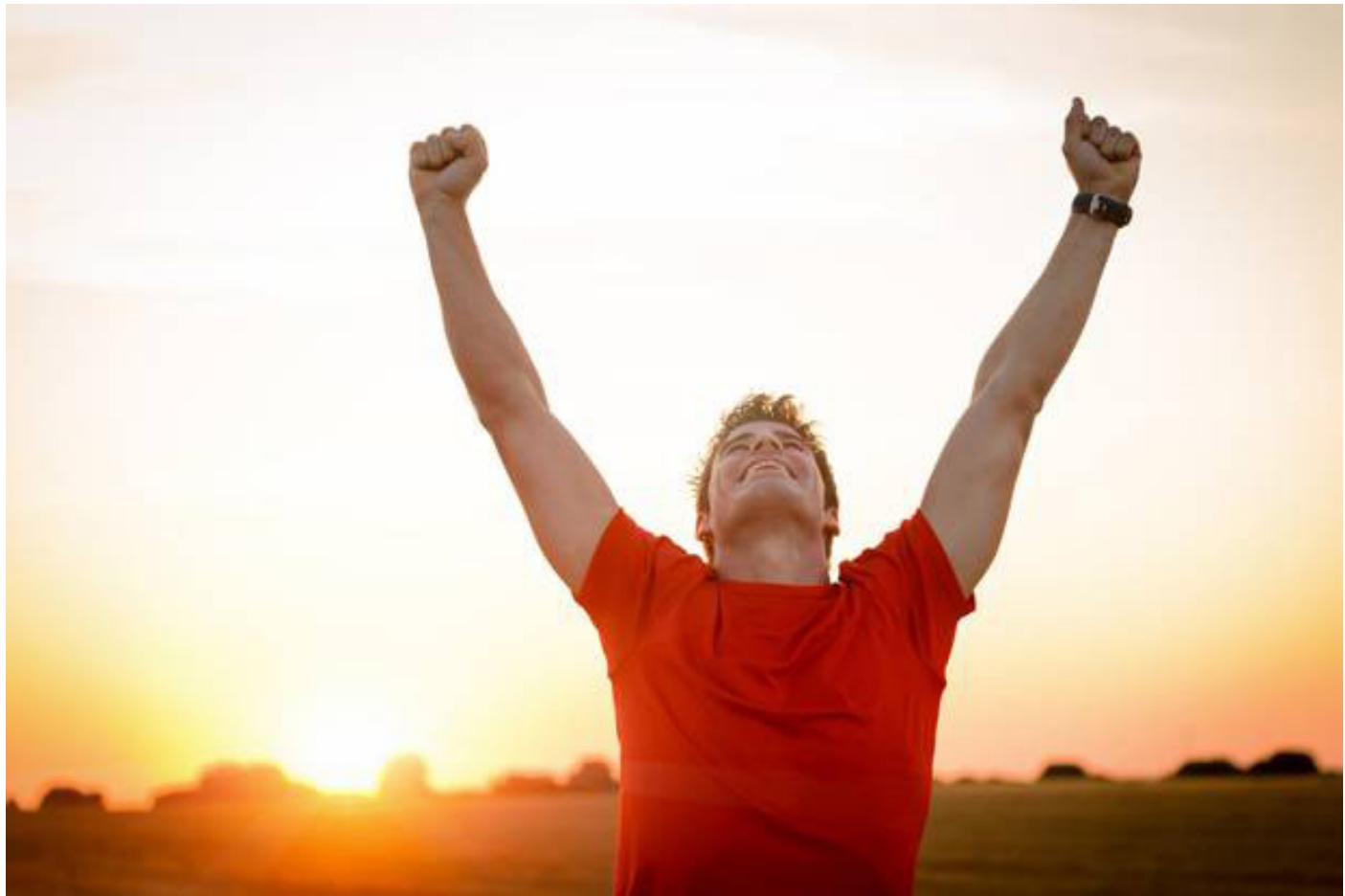
There are a range of local, regional and national support groups and charities which specifically help farmers, farming families and people living in farming communities (YANA, 2018). Local and regional support groups are often **locally owned and managed, independent**, with a **clear geographical or landscape identity** or **sectoral focus**. They are frequently made up of **staff, volunteers and trustees from the local area**. There is a sense among support groups that help should be provided by those that have a background in or understanding of farming (Price, 2012). Farmers like to speak to people who understand farming so this also means they are **known, seen and trusted** by farming communities.

"Farmers don't have to explain themselves constantly, which clearly helps. Because we are from farming stock they know we'll understand."

"We're all from farming and rural backgrounds which means we can have a conversation about the more technical issues."

"Many of the groups have staff and volunteers that come from farming communities so they can empathise with the world of farming; they understand the language, the psyche."

Support groups are **embedded** in people and place, and most are **established**. This is important because it can take time to build up trust and rapport with farmers and that they feel able to contact a support group **on their own terms**. The role of Young Farmers Clubs is one powerful example of a too narrowly interpreted network in terms of their wider impact on supporting farmer health and wellbeing.



"We need to be mindful that we have to help people to keep their dignity, respect and make decisions. We're non-judgemental and it takes some people time to come to us for help, and they have to come to us when they are ready."

"We want to make it okay for people to stay they don't feel good and then back that up with the support they need to help them."

"We take a drip-drip approach to farmers as they know us and many find it reassuring to see us. We are a core of committed people; our grit and determination and ethos... our success is down to our people and the way we communicate."

"From the helpline we will often visit farmers... in some cases this can be a long term commitment... Our key role is being a referral to other sources of practical help."

Given staff, volunteers and trustees are often from within the local community, ensuring **confidentiality and anonymity** of people approach support groups for help is important too.

"We treat the individual and their situation as confidential and we always try to give them help."

Support groups take a **holistic approach** and while some may be focused on a particular sector or issue, the majority **address a wide range of areas within the farm business, family and community**. These business areas may include (but are not limited to): the Basic Payment Scheme, record keeping, engaging with other agencies, animal welfare, business planning, succession, areas for improvement where farmers work together (e.g. benchmarking or monitor farm groups), training, and health and safety. These family areas may include issues relating to relationships, financial stress and poverty (food and fuel), and focused support around socialisation and engagement for young people – a significant example being the

youth engagement work of Upper Teesdale Agricultural Support Service (UTASS). The community areas may include help that seeks to address rural and social isolation, loneliness, and / or access to outreach facilities for other agencies.

The issues presented by farmers are individual, specific and often complex but in many cases mix business, family and community issues. Health and wellbeing issues are often integral to, or emerge from, these situations. Staff, volunteers and trustees at support groups have told us about instances of stress, anxiety, depression, difficulty sleeping, physical health problems, and sudden incapacitation (e.g. accident, relationship breakdown, bereavement) among the farms and farming communities they support.

While every support group is different, they share some common characteristics or traits in terms of the help they offer.

Farmers and farming communities find out about support groups through a wide range of sources – from events / sessions held by the support group or where the support group is present, through to online and social media. **Being visible** to the farming communities and **flexible** in the help that they offer '**makes it okay to ask for help**'.

"Over the last couple of years we have recognised the importance of being out there and being very visible and having conversations with farmers and farming families to inform them about what we are doing. This is not about meeting and speaking but doing. We've been increasing our visibility – as somewhere to go if you're looking for help when the going gets tough."

"We are a small organisation so we can react quickly to current need. We think on our feet and have our finger on the pulse of farming communities, of which we are an integral part. We've got flexibility."

Whether the support group is locally, regionally or nationally based, the importance of providing appropriate help **face-to-face** is important.

"It is important to take the service to farmers rather than wait for farmers to come to you."

"We can visit the individual in their own home, get the whole picture, and help them access support from us or from somewhere else. This face-to-face support is very important. We can visit them numerous times and stay for as long as needed."

"When we go out to speak to the farmer, gradually, over a cup of tea at the kitchen table, they will open up and we begin to find out the extent of the issues. We help them to see through the confusion and we can help them to prioritise."

"We can usually help in some way, even if we can't fix the situation. They know there's someone there that's on their side and will always be there to help. We're flexible so we can do what's best and what we need to do to meet their needs."

All support groups have **finite resources** (e.g. staff, volunteers, funding). Some support groups struggle to raise the **funds** they need or juggle a number of funders. This leads some groups to become project focused (because funders can be reluctant to cover core costs) and means that they are unable to plan for the longer term.

"It's convincing funders to support us when they have a rosy picture of farmers as not needing help and being wealthy."

"Funding is an enormous pressure. We do lots of fundraising and grant applications. It would be lovely if we were to get into a position of being self-sufficient... and that rather than filling out grant applications we could use that time instead for something helpful."

"The capacity and financial resources of [name of organisation] means that we can't always deliver as quickly as we'd like."

"We have funding pressures, time pressures... it's frustrating because you are constantly chasing funding and it does take up time you'd rather be doing useful things. It's nice to do your own fundraising but you're often marketing to the people you're trying to support... We would desperately like to have some more funding to be able to visit more farmers and their families."

"We can only plan year to year. We have no long-term agreements with any funders."

Some support groups struggle to **recruit and support sufficient staff, volunteers and trustees.**

"One of our main issues at the moment is having volunteers who understand farming and 'speak the language'. As a charity we never have enough volunteers."

"The number, availability and experience of volunteers are putting us under pressure. It's the sheer volume of case work we have and the lack of volunteers to support us."

As spending on many **public services have reduced**, support groups have found themselves **trying to plug the gaps** and / or describe how these reductions have impacted on referral processes.

"We have seen a reduction in support agencies, so where we might have received referrals in the past, they are not so timely because the organisations aren't there anymore. The specialist areas of support are more strained, so it's difficult for us to make referrals. The problems that people are presenting with are more complex than they used to be, so we have to spend more time with them than we did even five years ago."

"We've bolted on various activities, services and support without increasing the capacity and resources to deliver it. What we offered 10 years ago and what we offer now are vastly different... we now host a post office, a food bank... we have a much wider portfolio of projects and activities."

As support groups have taken on more activities to plug these gaps, the benefits are being accrued by other agencies and organisations.

"Everyone wants to use our services but no one wants to pay for them... the savings we deliver are huge but these are to third parties."

Some support groups are also preparing for increased demand on the help they offer, arising from Brexit and the roll out of Universal Credit.

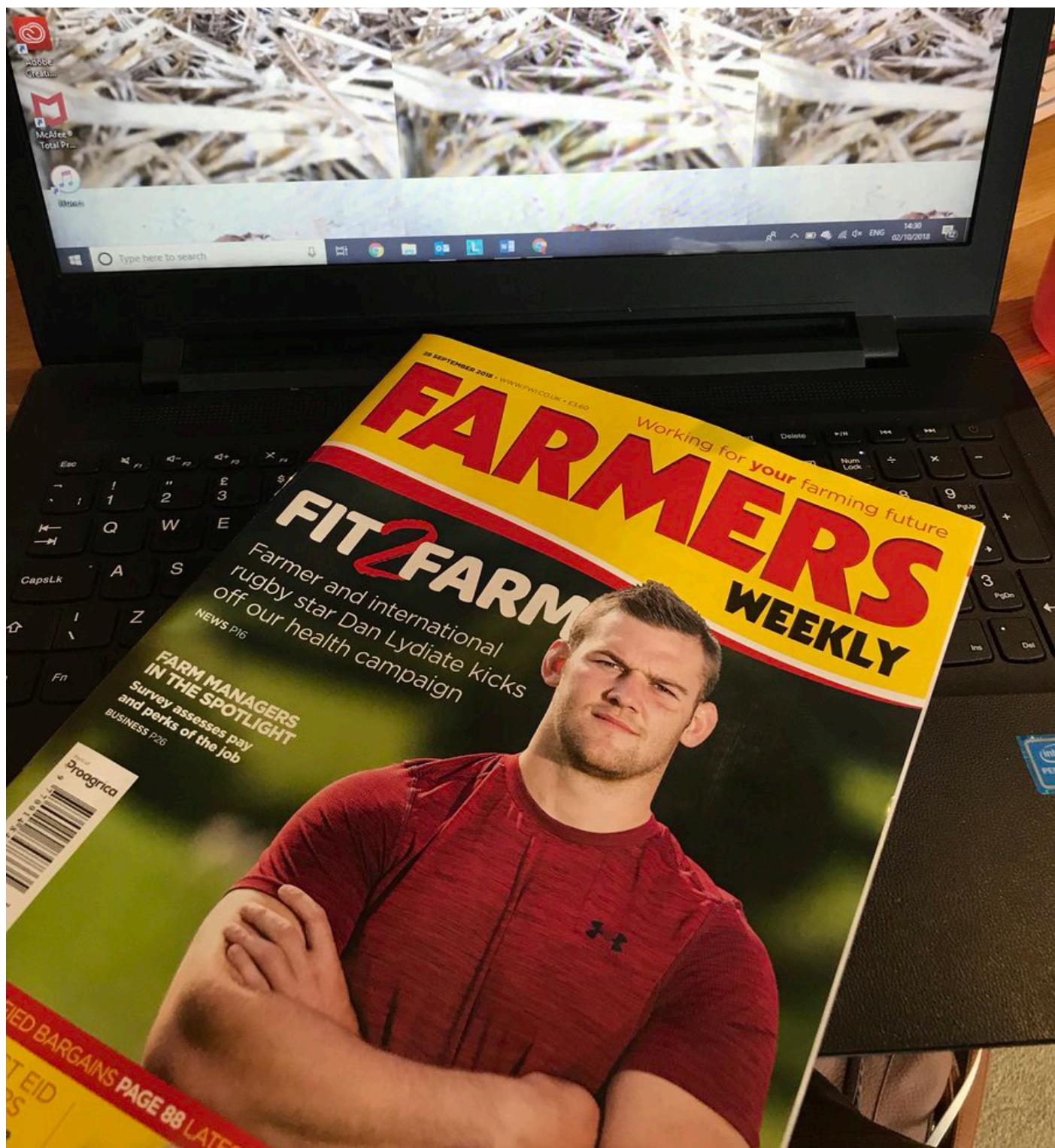
"With high nature farming post-Brexit, will farmers cope with being public gardeners rather than production driven?"

"Universal credit and Brexit will have a big effect over the next 5 years, so we will have to wait and see what happens. Our focus now is on making people more resilient when problems do occur."

Having modest finite resources can lead support groups to be reactive, **focusing on individual cases (people in crisis and / or hardship), rather than being as proactive and preventative** as they want to be.

"Farmers and farm workers that are not in as bad a state as those in dire straits. These are the people that are doing okay and don't see themselves as needing help to change. The people who come to see us are those in dire straits."

The 2018 Fit2Farm Survey suggests that farmers want to know more about work-life balance, managing tiredness, stress management, how not to worry about work, time management, problem-solving techniques, how to plan for retirement and how to resolve conflict (Tasker, 2018). Support groups are finding that there is a recent trend of farmers **talking more openly about the issues** affecting them.



"I have been around farming problems for 17 years. I think the problems have always been there but slowly now people have started talking about their problems, and wanting to address their issues."

"The stigma of mental health problems is slowly being eroded, which I think is a generational thing. Young people are less reticent because of posts on Facebook and social media, celebrities talking about it, etc. It's making them realise that there's nothing to be ashamed of. The older generation are more concerned it will make them a failure."

This opening up about physical and mental health issues is seen as providing opportunities for support groups (working with others) to develop new tools and approaches to the practical and emotional help they offer (Andersons, 2016). This may also assist support groups in reducing the stigma of asking for help and of finding new ways of getting farmers 'behind the hedge' to access support sooner.

"There are gaps in general education about how to budget and run a farm business. How can we help farmers to develop resilience so they know how to cope when things go wrong? Can I change that or do something differently?"

"Tackling mental health often comes at crisis point, yet we need a more upstream approach to help farmers manage their mental wellbeing while they are mentally well."

"We need to encourage people to talk and support each other – and find ways of getting people to help themselves."

There are other **gaps in the support** that groups are able to provide.

"Current support groups tend to focus on two categories of farmers: those bordering or in crisis, and those at the top of their game. What are the issues and where is the intervention and prevention for mid-way farmers? People settle for what they've got but things could be better."

"The Government is trying to help but they tend to cater for the more 'entrepreneurial' type of farmer."

This research has found support groups might be further enhanced in four main ways:

1. Enhancing the help provided to staff, volunteers and trustees at support groups. For those support groups that provide face-to-face or visiting services, staff and volunteers often have no idea what they might meet at the farm gate. Some regional and national support groups have systems in place to try to support staff and volunteers (e.g. the Samaritans may debrief call handlers, staff are assigned a mentor or buddy who may be an agricultural chaplain). Thinking about how to assist support groups in supporting staff, volunteers and trustees is seen as important so that they do not experience physical and mental health issues or reach burnout.

"Another issue is 'vicarious trauma', because often the farmers we visit are in desperate straits so everyone is suffering, the family, the livestock, and it is a difficult thing to deal with. You can take it home with you as a volunteer so we have to be mindful of our volunteers' mental wellbeing too."

2. While support groups make a significant difference to farmers and farming communities, some groups lack the **data and evidence to demonstrate their impact**. Some groups do already collect data about their impact as this is a requirement of their funding, have participated in academic and industry research and / or involve farmers in the design and delivery of their activities (e.g. an annual service user survey). There may be opportunities for support groups to review this **information and develop metrics** that can be measured to show the broader benefits of the work they've done (individually and collectively). This would also be helpful in setting out the offer of support groups and the **stickability** of what they do.

"We need to collect data and measure the longer term benefits of what we've prevented – for example, some presenting in crisis being admitted to hospital."

"We have been asked to participate in several research programmes. Currently, a university is conducting an investigation into the relationship between adverse events on a farm and thoughts of suicide. Previous research included farming stress... and how to incorporate an assessment of a farmer's mental health in the audit process... There have been so many that we actually have to limit the number we work with."

"Could a template be developed for other regions to use and roll out best practice?"

3. **There are examples of support groups networking** (e.g. through the ECF Forum; 'Over the Gate' farmer network publication produced by Paul Harper; the YANA Directory of support groups; and / or the FCN 'Fit for Farming' manual) – **How can this be built upon?**

"Links [with other support groups] have come about organically... you create contacts and it comes about naturally."

"Groups need to work together and start to share resources so different farmers are targeted... it's about ensuring you have the right people on board."

"I suspect that many of the groups came about, like us, to meet local need which other charities did not fill. What works in one county doesn't work in another."

4. **How far should support groups reach out to help people deal with the circumstances they face?** This raises issues around the relationship between support groups, Government and mainstream provision – particularly the link-up role of wraparound and ongoing support that support groups offer compared to the systematic, crisis and time constrained / limited interventions often provided by other agencies.

"When we go out to visit the individual our first role is to ascertain what support they're getting. We don't replace any statutory provision... we're a linchpin to provide signposting and access. A key role that we're taking up is ensuring that people are getting the support they should be getting."

"We are responsive within hours of a call coming through... our response is immediate. With

the NHS there's usually a 6-week wait for anything active. We would like to be much more 'visible' so that the NHS is aware we are there – we'd love them to refer farmers to us in the intervening period [before health intervention], so we can make sure they're okay."

"The issues are the referrals process and the ending of a farmer's case. For example, if a farmer goes to their GP with mental health difficulties, they do receive help but it's finite. So we try to fill those gaps. So if they have to wait for help we try and be there. When they are discharged we try to continue to offer support."

"We've just had a conversation with [name of NHS mental health trust]. They approached us as they were concerned about what they are seeing in farming families – want to involve [name of support group] and look at what we can do together. The NHS Trust is conscious that it needs to train staff differently to work with farming families... so it consulting with us on how to do that."

"I think we could learn lessons from health and the NHS... like how to ensure farmers have a healthy lifestyle."

5. Some of these issues around data / evidence, networking and communication might be supported by **technology**. For example, a study by Rural Support in Northern Ireland recommended the use of online resources to enable people to carry out confidential online mental health assessments and seek help. This was based on evidence that men, and young men in particular, were increasingly seeking help online, and that these kinds of services have worked well in New Zealand. It was felt that this would complement existing helplines. Similarly, instant email and messaging services should be available on support network websites (McCann, 2014). Healthcare is provided in some rural and remote areas using apps, Skype and e-health platforms.

"There is a need for accessible support for groups - apps and other technology could be really useful. It is surprising how cheaply and effectively this could be done."

3.4 Some examples of what works elsewhere

A number of other countries have nationwide initiatives to promote wellbeing among farmers and farming communities. This is true of the following two examples from New Zealand and Australia. Both are delivered on a non-profit basis by partnerships that include health services and other organisations, but with no direct Government involvement in the design and delivery of the support.

In **New Zealand**, **FarmStrong** is a nationwide programme to promote wellbeing in rural communities (<https://farmstrong.co.nz>). The programme has been developed by FMG (a rural insurance company) and the Mental Health Foundation of New Zealand. It includes online tools to assess mental health, videos showing farmers' accounts of how they deal with stress, a blog, and a series of events including mental health workshops, and comedy shows. The programme is funded via a combination of charitable donations, grants and contract income.

The programme was launched in 2015, and the first year evaluation of *FarmStrong* showed that mental health workshops were well attended by farmers. Those that attended identified improvements in their ability to cope with the ups and downs of farming, and this was

particularly pronounced among those attending two-day, more intensive workshops.

In **Australia**, the **National Centre for Farmer Health (NCFH)** aims to improve the health, wellbeing and safety of farmers, farm workers, families and communities across Australia (<https://www.farmerhealth.org.au>). NCFH has been created as a partnership between the Western District Health Service and Deakin University, Victoria. Unlike *FarmStrong*, some of its funding comes from regional government, alongside income from charitable trusts, research grants, and private sponsorship.

A key element of the NCFH is the **Sustainable Farm Families (SFF) programme**, which was first launched in 2003. This is a health promotion programme which focuses on farmer health, wellbeing and safety issues. SFF is delivered in local areas using a series of facilitated workshops. Because of the link with Deakin University, the delivery of the programme has been underpinned by research, and includes a strong focus on knowledge exchange. SFF has received a number of awards for its role in addressing rural health issues. However, it has, over the course of its operation, encountered funding problems which have threatened the continued provision of support.

In the **Netherlands**, the **Skylark Foundation** brings together arable farmers, agricultural merchants and food processing industries to work together. The three core activities of the Foundation are: (i) stimulating sustainable production, (ii) facilitating the organisation of sustainable supply chains and (iii) 'restoring' the social context of the relationship between food producers and consumers.

Each farmer member develops a sustainability plan. The plan positions the farmer and his activities against 10 key indicators as a framework for sustainable farming. These indicators are Product Value, Soil Fertility, Soil Loss, Nutrients, Crop Protection, Water, Energy, Biodiversity, Human Capital and Local Economy. The farmer then works with consultants, where required, and with a group of peers, organised into regional clusters, to implement and refine the plan. Each network is convened and facilitated by a local co-ordinator.

The network began in 2002, initially in Flevoland, with a network of 12 farmers. It now has 30 local networks operating across the Netherlands. It is based on farmers realising a long-term vision for the development of their farm business – over a typical time period of 20 years – but also recognises the need to increase the short-term profitability of farms by reducing costs and implementing best practice.



4. NEXT STEPS

This section of the report looks at how the research may be taken forward by the WCF and support groups.

Recommendation - Campaign for a more effective and sympathetic collection of data

– Public Health England have acknowledged the limitations associated with the current data collection process about mental health. Our analysis of the data notwithstanding its limitations identified some useful insights about the impact of external events on the level of suicide such as foot and mouth, the incidence of suicide amongst different professions associated with farming and issues around the categorisation of on farm deaths. There is some acknowledgement within Public Health England of the potential to look at enhanced approaches to reporting to take account of these issues and that should be pursued actively with them.

Recommendation - Measure the impact of support groups – The development of a common framework for identifying and measuring the impact of support groups would help raise their profile and make the case for more structural funding. This needs to be developed in conjunction with a third party as many support groups have neither the expertise nor the capacity to undertake such work independently. Measurement can take a number of forms but due to the somewhat intangible and preventive nature of the outcomes delivered this process particularly lends itself to the use of social return on investment as a technique. The Rose Regeneration report “Putting the Spotlight on Farming Communities” trialled this technique with a number of networks and there is scope to build on this approach.

Recommendation - Encourage awareness of support groups and their communication

– There is a dual impact, which could be achieved both in terms of enhanced referrals and greater appreciation of value/importance if networks were more effective at raising awareness of their activities. The “Fit to Farm” campaign has shown how significant the potential constituency to support the work of these networks is. Whilst there is scope for a national awareness raising campaign it is clear that the greatest strength of the networks is their local context and this is likely where the greatest impact of awareness raising is to be achieved.

Recommendation - Ensure that the breadth of farm and land-based occupations are supported

– Farm workers have emerged as a priority group through this research, with a higher rate of suicides and self-reported mental ill-health than farmers and farm managers. Available support should therefore target the breadth of farm and land-based occupations. Promotion of this could include a variety of communication methods and channels, beyond those focused solely at farmers, and include online platforms and apps. There are also a cluster of issues linked to: socialisation, career development and succession planning which are specific to younger people and focused support building on the current portfolio of work available to this discrete group merits further consideration/attention.

Recommendation - Encourage collaboration and networking support groups – It is our conviction that the work of support groups is most effective when organised and expressed at the local level. This does not mean that the organisations should exist in isolation. Indeed it is clear that there are significant benefits about shared understanding and problem solving, which can be derived from networking and this should be further encouraged and potentially externally supported. A network support role hosted by an organisation such as

the Worshipful Company of Farmers or another strategic body interacting with and taking an overview of the operation of all networks would be particularly useful as a force to strengthen network linkages. There are less intensive opportunities to connect the networks through the use of digital media, which could be explored. There are also other opportunities to develop the strength of networks including: development of common impact measures (as identified above); common publicity strategies; and shared approaches to working with the NHS and other non-farm based support bodies.

Recommendation - Give farmers and farming communities simple tools to help them manage their health and wellbeing – It is clear that the upstream health and well-being support for farming communities is too generic and not focused enough on those working in farming who are most vulnerable. Social prescribing which is focused on increasing health and well-being through preventive action does not have a dedicated farming component. Better engagement between support networks and the Clinical Commissioning Groups leading this work could provide resources and an additional area of focus for the support networks. More widely there are a number of activities which have been very successful in other settings supporting different groups with mental health challenges which could be transferred as good practice to the work of farmer networks. Mental Health First Aid is a classic example of a powerful and low cost approach, which could be used more widely by farmer networks. An audit of transferrable activities would be very useful and help address the challenges faced by many networks, which are so focused on front-line delivery they don't have the capacity to look for impact enhancing good practice.

Recommendation - Raise awareness of support groups with (1) Defra, (2) statutory bodies and (3) funders in ways that lead to better connections? – It is clear that there is further headway to be made with statutory funders and major charities in promoting the work of the networks more effectively. With better data collection and enhanced collaboration it should be possible for the networks to work together to make a pitch for the wider recognition of the impact and case for funding of local networks based on their preventive impacts. This should involve a series of subtle measures pulling out the distinctive challenges facing key groups such for example as contractors, farm labourers and young people in farming communities. It is disappointing that Defra do not currently see benefit in a direct relationship with the suicide prevention agenda and the regular treadmill that networks face to raise their funding demonstrates the fact that local health and well-being funders (CCG, and local authorities) do not appreciate the value of the networks as much as they may. One silver lining in this context is that there is no drive to create a standardised approach, which would be contrary to the local context, which is at the core of each network. It remains true however that a patchy picture of effective relationship building between the statutory sector and the networks lessens and complicates their impact of referral and avoidance agencies. A senior level engagement with politicians and opinion forming agencies at the local and national level could significantly improve this position and a consideration as to how best to achieve this is very worthwhile.

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Appendix A: A summary of the rapid evidence review

RESEARCH AREA

The current picture of mental and physical health in agricultural communities.

Findings from the literature:

- The latest data on suicide by occupation is for 2015, which is a significant data lag given the rapidly changing nature of farming in the UK.
- The overall number of suicides among those involved in farming occupations has declined from 53 in 2001 to 36 in 2015 (ONS, 2017).
- Mental ill-health and suicide among farmers and farm workers is a global issue, with high rates of suicide reported in the USA, France and India (Naik, 2016).
- UK farmers have a suicide mortality rate that is around average for all occupations, but for farm workers the rate is twice the average (ONS, 2015).
- For males in England, accidents and suicides are higher in rural than urban areas, after adjustments for deprivation (Gartner, 2011; Hounsome, 2012).
- There is a need for further analysis of health inequalities in rural areas, and better data on mental health in UK farming (Garner et al, 2011; Naik, 2017).
- A survey by HSE (2018a) found lower mental wellbeing among farmers that are older, not financially reliant on farm income, and that had been injured on the farm.
- Among workers in agriculture, forestry and fishing, more than half of work-related illnesses are musculoskeletal disorders (HSE, 2018b).
- The fatal injury rate in farming remains 19 times the rate for all industries (HSE, 2018b).
- The non-fatal injury rate for farmers is around double that for all industries (HSE, 2018b).
- Among non-fatal injuries to farm employees, the largest causes were slips, trips or falls (22%), being injured by an animal (20%) and falls from height (19%) (HSE, 2018b).
- Livestock farmers have more risky behaviours and more accidents (HSE & Ipsos MORI, 2017).
- 15% of farm workers report being in an accident in the last 12 months, higher than other farming occupations such as farm owners and managers (Tasker, 2018).
- One in five farm owners do not have a regular day off, and 12% don't take holiday. 60% of farm owners do not exercise outside of the farm (Tasker, 2018).
- Farm workers (15%) and farm managers (17%) are more likely than farm owners (12%) to report poor mental health (Tasker, 2018).
- Almost a third of farm workers smoke (30%). They are most likely to eat no fruit or vegetables (6%) (Tasker, 2018).
- Across all farming occupations, more than half of respondents to the Fit2Farm Survey said that they drank regularly (Tasker, 2018).

RESEARCH AREA

Factors that make farming communities susceptible to loss of wellbeing.

Findings from the literature:

- Rural culture favours stoicism, which influences health behaviours (Kilpatrick et al, 2012).
- Male farmers are conditioned to believe that they need to be tough and self-reliant, which leads to a reluctance in admitting health problems or seeking support (Naik, 2017).
- Farmers work on average 65 hours per week, 11% never take a holiday and 10% never take part in off-farm activities. 40% want a better work-life balance (Tasker, 2018).

- Social isolation experienced by farmers – caused by rural remoteness, working long hours and working alone – can lead to loneliness and poor mental health (Skerratt, 2018).
- Succession is a big issue facing family-run farms in the UK. However, fewer than 40% have put succession plans in place (The Prince's Countryside Fund, 2017).
- The patrilineal culture of farming in the UK creates the assumption that farming men have a 'right' to stay on the land. This can override rational decisions about whether to stay in or leave farming (Price, 2012).

RESEARCH AREA

Wider pressures affecting the UK farming sector.

Findings from the literature:

- Half of farms are no longer making a living from farming (Andersons, 2016).
- New cash flow problems are affecting UK farms, which also affects suppliers and the wider rural economy. Levels of borrowing have almost doubled in the last 10 years (Andersons, 2016).
- The unpredictability of weather, price pressure, market volatility, and 'red tape' are stressors that affect many farmers and growers (Naik, 2017).
- Inspections by a range of regulatory bodies are causing stress and cost to farmers (Tenant Farmers Association, 2018).
- The administration of the Countryside Stewardship and Basic Payment Scheme have added stress and cost to the farming industry (Tenant Farmers Association).
- 66% of UK dairy farms have closed since 1995. Many of those that remain rely on credit (The Prince's Countryside Fund, 2017).
- Increased trading costs and reduced domestic support brought about by Brexit are likely to bring about reduced income to UK farms (AHDB, 2017a).
- Farms involved in cereals, and upland beef and sheep, will be most affected by loss of farm income after Brexit, and may become loss making (AHDB, 2017a).
- Reduction in availability of migrant labour after Brexit is expected to affect horticulture the most (AHDB, 2017a).
- The UK is the largest exporter of sheep meat in the EU, so tariff-free access to the EU market after Brexit will be crucial to the sector's prospects (AHDB, 2017b).
- Different Brexit scenarios will have very different impacts on the financial health of farm businesses (NFU, 2018).
- Most of the difference between profitable and non-profitable farms is due to decisions made by the farmer. Less than 5% is related to geographic factors, such as soil and climate (AHDB, 2018).
- Upland farmers are more reliant than most on direct payments, but will be most likely to benefit from environmental land management contracts (DEFRA, 2018a).
- The average level of debt across all farms in 2016/17 was around £202,100 (DEFRA, 2018b).
- There has been a long-term increase in farm debt driven by increases in long-term loans, such as bank or building society loans rather than overdrafts or other short-term loans (DEFRA, 2018b).

RESEARCH AREA

Factors affecting wellbeing in wider rural communities in the UK.

Findings from the literature:

- Remote rural areas have seen a local service decline over the last 10 years, including service centralisation, which can contribute to a downward spiral in health and wellbeing (Skerratt, 2018).
- Young people in rural areas 'not involved in farming' are more disadvantaged than those involved in farming as they have less opportunity for employment (Skerratt, 2018).
- In the Scottish Highlands, rural isolation, poor weather, poverty and low aspirations are thought to contribute to high levels of mental illness. There is a lack of high quality, accessible support services, and a lack of awareness of services such as the Samaritans, particularly among young people (Samaritans, 2018).
- UK rural communities are experiencing emerging issues that are causing stress: (i) CAP reform and decrease in single farm payments; (ii) welfare reforms; (iii) prolonged high level of rural unemployment; (iv) hidden rural poverty (McCann, 2014).
- Four drivers of rural stress are: (i) shifting policies and financial pressure (e.g. CAP reform); (ii) instability, risk and uncertainty (animal disease, changing weather); (iii) increasing isolation and service provision (out-migration of young people, service decline); (iv) family pressures (e.g. rural poverty, mental health) (McCann, 2014).

RESEARCH AREA

Examples of rural/farming mental health support initiatives in the UK.

Findings from the literature:

- Various support networks exist across the UK, including The Farming Community Network, RABI, YANA, and Local Rural Support Networks. Services offered include helplines, 1:1 visits and the opportunity to talk to counsellors.
- YANA (You Are Not Alone) provides mental health support to farmers in Norfolk and Suffolk, although its website is open to everyone. It has produced a national directory of rural support groups (<https://www.yanahelp.org/national-directory.html>)
- The Farm Community Network provides a helpline for farmers to talk to someone who understands farmers and rural life on issues related to farming, family, business and health (<http://www.fcn.org.uk/help>).
- The Farm Safety Foundation has launched the "Mind Your Head" campaign, a weeklong initiative starting February 2018 to raise awareness of mental health among the farming community (<https://www.yellowwellies.org/category/latestnews/mind-your-head/>)
- The National Federation of Young Farmers Clubs has launched the Rural+ campaign (<http://www.nfyfc.org.uk/Ruralplus>). It provides information and tools to encourage Young Farmers Clubs to become a strong support network for rural young people.
- The Fit2Farm initiative (<https://twitter.com/hashtag/fit2farm>) has been launched by Farmers Weekly, in partnership with WCF, the Farming Community Network and the Farm Safety Foundation, to highlight the importance of wellbeing among farmers.
- An online forum, The Crazy Life of a Farmer's Life (<https://crazyfarmerswives.com>) provides support to the wives and partners of farmers.
- AHBD has a range of tools as part of its Fit for the Future (FFT) promotion, including a Brexit Impact Calculator and Resilience Checklist (<https://ahdb.org.uk/brexit-fit-for-the-future>) (AHBD, 2018)

RESEARCH AREA

Potential Solutions - from UK sources

Findings from the literature:

- UK farming would benefit from a dedicated, farmer-specific, educational initiative on wellbeing (Naik, 2016).
- Farmers want to know more about: work-life balance (40%); managing tiredness (39%); stress management (28%); how not to worry about work (25%); time management (22%); problem-solving techniques (16%); how to plan for retirement (13%); how to resolve conflict (11%) (Tasker, 2018).
- Farm workers want to learn more about managing tiredness and fatigue (47%). Farm managers want to learn about how to manage stress (38%), and techniques to stop worrying about work all the time (44%) (Tasker, 2018).
- Cross-sector commitment is needed to encourage farm businesses to engage with the farming help charities and the business tools and advice available (Andersons, 2016).
- Support staff need to increase their understanding of the range of practical and emotional support available to farmers (Andersons, 2016).
- Use of online resources enables people to carry out confidential online mental health assessments and seek help (McCann, 2014).
- Men, and young men in particular, are increasingly seeking help online. These would complement existing farm support helplines (in Northern Ireland) (McCann, 2014).
- Instant email and messaging services should be available on support network websites (McCann, 2014).
- No one organisation can effectively address all the issues impacting on farmers (McCann, 2018).
- There is 'an accepted need' for an integrated approach (involving Government, farms, unions, NGOs, the private sector and farmers themselves). There is no need for more agencies, but better adaptation, cooperation, and integration of existing services (McCann, 2018).
- Blanket programmes need to consider such variations in farm sizes, structure and location when programmes are designed and applied (McCann, 2018).
- Solutions to healthcare provision in remote areas include e-services, e.g. e-health, apps, Skype appointments, technical safety services, and digitised village halls as rural hubs for CAB, credit unions and pharmacies (Skerratt, 2018).
- Mental health support should be provided by those that understand the patrilineal culture of farming and farmers' ties to the land. Farmers are unlikely to contact generic mental health organisations (Price, 2012).
- Support organisations also need to challenge farmers' assumptions around patrilineal farming, as these in themselves raise expectations of farm survival at all costs (Price, 2012).

RESEARCH AREA

Potential solutions – Research and Lessons from Australia and New Zealand.

Findings from the literature:

- Farmers are more likely to engage with health-related services that are from or are endorsed by trusted and credible individuals or organisations (Kilpatrick et al, 2012).
- Places where farmers can build social connectedness are important for the health and wellbeing of farmers. These can include community groups, sports facilities, opportunities to volunteer, and industry associations (Kilpatrick et al, 2012; Cadwell and Boyd, 2009).

- In New Zealand, FarmStrong is a nationwide programme to promote wellbeing in rural communities (<https://farmstrong.co.nz>). It includes online tools to assess mental health, videos showing farmers' accounts of how they deal with stress, a blog, and a series of events, including mental health workshops, and comedy shows.
- During the first year of FarmStrong, 31 mental health workshops were attended by 1,222 farmers: 23 were 2-3 hour workshops attended by 962 farmers; 8 were 2 day workshops attended by 160 farmers.
- A survey of farmers and farm workers who had attended the FarmStrong workshops showed that 38% reported improvement in 'their ability to cope with ups and downs of farming'. This increased to 71% for those that had participated in a 2 day workshop.

Appendix B: A list of interviewees and a copy of the discussion guides

LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

Representatives from the following organisations were interviewed as part of the research:

- Arthur Rank Centre
- Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire Rural Support Group
- Cheshire Agricultural Chaplaincy
- Farm Cornwall
- The Farming Community Network
- Focussed Farmers
- Lincolnshire Rural Support Network
- The National Centre for Rural Health and Care
- National Farmers Union
- National Federation of Young Farmer Clubs
- National Rural Mental Health Forum
- Nottinghamshire Rural Support Network
- Nuffield Farming Scholarship scholars (x2, 2018 scholars)
- Perennial
- Prince's Countryside Fund
- Public Health England
- Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution (R.A.B.I)
- Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP) Rural Forum]
- Rural Support (Advice and Rural Support Northern Ireland)
- Shropshire Rural Support
- Tenant Farmers Association
- Tir Dewi
- UTASS (Upper Teesdale Agricultural Support Services)
- The YANA Project (You Are Not Alone)
- Yorkshire Agricultural Society

COPY OF THE DISCUSSION GUIDES

Discussion guide for support groups

1. A brief overview of your organisation, role and responsibilities.
2. What do you think are the key health and wellbeing issues facing farmers and farming families?
 - What causes these issues?
 - Over the last 10 years, do you think these issues have worsened, improved or remained the same, and why?
 - How prevalent are these issues across different types of farmer, sectors of farming, different age groups and/or geographical areas?
 - In the next 5 years, do you think these issues will improve, worsen or remain the same, and why?

3. An overview of the activities you undertake to support farmers and farming families.

- What challenges or pressures do you face?
- Are there any areas of need or geographical areas that are not covered by current support groups?
- Do you see enhanced opportunities for you to work with other local, regional and national support organisations?

4. How do you think the help provided by farmer support groups aligns to mainstream provision?

5. Are you aware of any potential/future activities or projects that may include working with farmers to improve their health and wellbeing?

6. Any additional information to add/reflections not covered during the discussion.

Discussion guide for *stakeholders*

1. A brief overview of your organisation, role and responsibilities.

2. What do you think are the key health and wellbeing issues facing farmers, farming families and rural communities?

- What causes these issues?
- Over the last 10 years, do you think these issues have worsened, improved or remain the same, and why?
- How prevalent are these issues across different types of farmer, sectors of farming, different age groups and/or geographical areas?
- In the next 5 years, do you think these issues will improve, worsen or remain the same, and why?

3. An overview of the activities you undertake to support farmers, farming families and rural communities, including:

- Any activities you undertake directly.
- Any activities you do with partners.
- Your awareness of local, regional and national farmer support organisations.

4. How do you think the help provided by farming support groups aligns to mainstream provision?

5. Do you think there are any areas of need or geographical areas where farmers require more help and support?

6. Are you aware of any potential/future activities or projects that may include working with farmers to improve their health and wellbeing?

7. Any additional information to add/reflections not covered during the discussion.

Appendix C: A summary from the 'testing our findings' forum meeting

HEALTH AND WELLBEING RESEARCH PROJECT MEETING

Tuesday 6 November 2018, 2:00-4:00pm

Harvard Lecture Theatre, David Chiddick Building, University of Lincoln

DISCUSSION SUMMARY

Present: Holly Beckett (*Focussed Farmers*), Matt Caldicott (*National Federation of Young Farmers' Club*), Kate Dale (*Yorkshire Rural Support Network*), Glyn Evans (*Farming Community Network*), Gordon Gatward (*WCF*), Peter Geldart (*Nottinghamshire Rural Support*), Laurie Norris (*NFU*), Tom Price (*NFU*), Diane Spark (*UTASS*), Johann Tasker (*Farmers Weekly*), Meryl Ward (*Lincolnshire Rural Support Network*), Philip Wynn (*WCF*), Liz Price (*University of Lincoln*), Ivan Annibal (*Rose Regeneration*) and Jessica Sellick (*Rose Regeneration*).

Apologies: Dr. Robert Lambourn (*RCGP Rural Forum*), Sarah Palmer (*NFYFC*), Trish Pickford (*RABI*), Melinder Raker (*YANA*), Alan Spedding (*RuSource*) and Cath Sykes (*NFYFC*).

The meeting covered three principal areas: (1) background to the research, (2) emerging findings, and (3) where next? The purpose of the session was to get views and feedback from those present about the research undertaken so far. This document summarises the discussion that took place under each of these areas. It does not list or attribute every comment made and is not intended as a set of minutes.

1. Background to the research

Philip Wynn, Master of the Worshipful Company of Farmers (WCF) in 2017, initiated a discussion about health and wellbeing in agriculture. From his initial engagements it became clear that the issue was not well understood within the wider industry and there were opportunities to intervene to support people before they were overwhelmed by their condition, particularly younger people.

In **September 2018 Rose Regeneration and the University of Lincoln were commissioned to undertake research into the health and wellbeing of farmers and farming communities by the WCF.**

14 research questions were set by the WCF:

1. Over the past 10 years, is there any evidence that issues relating to health and wellbeing in agriculture have:

- Worsened
- Improved
- Remained the same

2. Is there any clear evidence that in the next 5 years these issues will:

- Improve
- Worsen
- Remain the same

3. Is there any evidence that the causes of problems relating to mental health and wellbeing

have changed over the past 10 years, and if so, what are those changes?

4. In terms of age, is there an increasing incidence of issues among young people? Where do they go for help?

5. Are there any specific sectors within farming that have a higher incidence of mental health issues?

6. Are there any noticeable regional differences regarding mental health and wellbeing issues within the UK agricultural workforce, and if so, is there any indication as to the causes of those differences?

7. Are there any areas of need or geographical areas that are not covered by the current support provisions?

8. Are there ways in which the various local, regional and national support organisations could work more efficiently and effectively?

- Closer co-operation and collaboration
- Improved promotion, education and awareness raising
- Resourcing and funding

9. What resources are needed to facilitate this?

10. What part can the existing organisations play?

11. Is national coordination essential and how?

12. How relevant is the FarmStrong Network in NZ to the UK position?

13. How can we get greater recognition of the issues?

14. What are the key priorities for the group set up by the WCF?

To answer these questions, the following activities have been undertaken:

i) A Rapid Evidence Assessment (REA) drawing together literature from academics, policy makers and practitioners.

ii) A review of farmers networks in the UK and internationally that deliver health and wellbeing outcomes (e.g. The FarmStrong Network in New Zealand).

iii) Data collection and analysis, working with Public Health England to identify the most appropriate datasets they hold.

iv) A telephone survey of national stakeholders who have experience of working with farmers and farming communities in the context of health and wellbeing.

v) A telephone survey of local and regional groups using the National Rural Support Groups Directory from YANA and assistance from the WCF.

Papers summarising the emerging findings from these activities were circulated in advance of the meeting.

2. Emerging Findings

a) How can we get greater recognition of the issues and the role support groups play?

Health and wellbeing:

- 10, 15 years ago people did not talk about health and wellbeing – people feel more able to open up and talk about these issues now.
- Support groups need to be more proactive as well as supporting people in crisis.
- Support groups need to be more upstream and solution focused, rather than analysing the issues.
- The activities of FarmStrong, a nationwide wellbeing campaign in New Zealand (<https://farmstrong.co.nz/>), and the Skylark Foundation in the Netherlands (<http://www.saiplatform.org/projects/65/98/Skylark-Foundation-in-the-Netherlands>), are outside of the scope of what most support groups currently do
- The Government has appointed a Minister for Suicide Prevention – do we need a Government appointment for happiness?
- Focussed Farmers uses coaching, Mindfulness Measurement Index™ (MMI), meditation and goal setting, with emerging results suggesting that, on average, participants have increased self-discipline of 27%, a 26% increase in positive state of mind, 23% increase in focus, and an overall decrease in stress levels of 20%.
- The Fit2Farm campaign, led by Farmers Weekly, has taken a preventative angle rather than looking at how to pick up the pieces when things go wrong. The campaign is about helping farmers to look after their physical and mental health and wellbeing: a healthy farm business needs a healthy farmer [the business and wider benefits that happen when farmers look after themselves]. The ambassador for the campaign is farmer and Welsh international rugby star Dan Lydiate. The campaign has led to a series of articles in Farmers Weekly, with the publisher looking at what more it can do with others to build on this work (e.g. set up a similar initiative to FarmStrong?).
- How can we discuss a problem that people don't want to talk about constantly (e.g. stress, suicide)?
- **A key finding from both Focussed Farmers and Farmers Weekly over the past 12 months is that farmers want the tools to be able to manage stress, and do want to talk about these issues.**
- The NFU is also responding to member demand and interest in health and wellbeing issues. A mental wellbeing session at the NFU conference was well attended and led to a conversation amongst the audience rather than a panel discussion.
- The importance of also working with farm vets, surveyors, agronomists and ancillary industries – other professionals/organisations that go onto farms.

Awareness raising:

- Local level awareness of support groups is important – for potential users of services and to highlight that something is being done. **How can we improve awareness at a local level?** Unless you have local awareness, all the work that you do becomes meaningless.
- If we stop raising awareness of support groups we stop people having permission to seek support. **How can we have upbeat, positive messages that do not preclude people from coming forward for help?**
- Funding for support groups comes from mixed sources – including fundraising locally, which is seen as important for raising the profile of groups.
- The more people that know about your support group, the wider its networks become.

Greater recognition by whom?

- Some support groups are known to Defra and have conversations with officials from the Rural Payments Agency, Natural England and other agencies.
- Previously, Defra had been more directly involved with support groups with a decision

made that they would carry on and the Forum, rather than Government, would bring these groups together.

- **Recognition by: (1) Defra, (2) statutory bodies, and (3), funders.**
- Support groups are funded in different ways and the value that we each bring as a network could provide opportunities to have a cohesive conversation with funders.
- Who else should be interested in our work? Chaplaincy services and agricultural chaplains who interface directly with farmers.

b) Data and evidence – what information do we need to collect?

Some examples of data already collected by support groups:

- Lincolnshire Rural Support Network has developed a robust dataset over a number of years, using the mental wellbeing ladder for its contracts with primary care.
- Focussed Farmers uses the Mindfulness Measurement Index™ (MMI).
- Rural Support (Northern Ireland) uses the Edinburgh-Warwick Scale.
- UTASS has undertaken social value analysis for 4 of its key activities: basic payment scheme support for farmers, music & memories sessions for people with dementia, luncheon club and youth club. The findings of this work were used in a successful funding bid.
- Some support groups are involved/familiar with the Prince's Countryside Fund Farm Resilience Programme – with each farmer participating in a series of workshops and receiving one-to-one on-farm support.
- What data can be collected from the Rural+ campaign led by the NFYFC, working with the FCN and Young Minds?
- ***Much of the existing data collection starts with the unit of the farming family/household.***
- ***Two measures of impact would be useful for support groups: (1) individual mental/physical health and wellbeing improvements, and (2) broader recognition of the social value you are delivering.***
- How the work undertaken by support groups delivers cost savings for statutory bodies.
- How confidentiality and anonymity affects the outcomes data support groups are able to collect.

Suicide in agricultural occupations:

- When we talk about farm suicide we talk about farmers, and farm workers are in danger of being overlooked. Farm workers do not necessarily read Farmers Weekly and watch or listen to farming programmes. The analysis presented by Liz Price graph shows the standard mortality ratio for farmers is 101, and for farm workers 221 (11 or more is above average). ***How can we get farm workers and their employers to recognise health and wellbeing issues and the support available? How might the Forum pick this up?***
- Coroners vary considerably in the verdicts they give to individuals who probably died by suicide. This means that suicide statistics do not capture probably suicides. Similarly, the HSE records accidents when they are not accidents.
- How suicide rates in occupations vary according to managerial and elementary skills, and how much control people have over their working lives.
- The data lag – with the information presented on the graphs drawn from ONS data in 2015.
- Some statistics compiled by ONS stop at age 64 years. People in farming who are over 64 years of age may not be captured in these graphs.
- It was noted that breaking the data down by age group, by farm occupation and by region was difficult.

- The standard mortality ratio for ‘agricultural and fishing trades’ is 364 (where anything over 100 is above average). While this is a large grouping as the Forum is interested in the land-based sector – and as people may have multiple roles working in the sector (e.g. as a part-time gamekeeper and a part-time farm worker) – this information was viewed as useful.
- Data on hospital stays for self-harm and alcohol abuse is skewed by urban areas. GPs recognise heavy drinking in farming communities, but this does not find its way into official statistics.
- Farmers do not report accidents unless they are serious – how many use the farm accident book? Research for the Fit2Farm campaign found 10% of farmers had been involved in a farm accident, with a further 6% involved in an accident but not injured.
- Drinking alcohol to excess or having an accident due to tiredness is not the issue; it is a consequence of the underlying rationale for that behaviour.
- Health organisations recognise cost savings from a physical issue rather than a mental issue (i.e. it is often easier to estimate the cost of liver and kidney problems that need treatment as a result of alcohol misuse).
- How far do the boundaries of support groups reach out to help people deal with the circumstances they face? There are limitations to the breadth of support such groups can offer outside of initial contact.

a) Gaps in support – how might these be filled?

- Times are currently tough for dairy farmers, and may be difficult for arable farmers in the next few years. Support groups are seeing an increase in medium-sized owner occupier farmers approaching them for help – it is no longer the traditional clientele seeking support. ***Is the current infrastructure of support groups able to pick up the signs earlier?***
- How can support groups help farmers to exit with dignity and find a different way of existing?
- Volunteers require training, support and investment. Volunteers need to be able to recognise the point beyond which they are not trained to go – but the help [from statutory agencies] is not always there when it is needed.
- More corporate support groups are likely to have support in place for staff and volunteers. During Foot and Mouth Disease, the Arthur Rank Centre handled a very large number of calls a day for help; Samaritans provided help to debrief the call handlers. Other support groups provide staff and volunteers with a mentor or chaplain support.
- The Red Tractor Assurance Scheme requires suppliers to safeguard against any form of modern slavery taking place within the business – how can assurance schemes and audits be used to check employers are looking after their staff correctly?
- ***How can digital infrastructure be used to better connect support groups?***
- The importance of support groups working together and avoiding duplication.
- How can we engage retailers and the private sector in our work?
- Inviting a representative from LANDEX or an agricultural college to join the Forum?

3. Where next?

- The importance of three categories of people/organisations that need to know more about the work of the Forum and support groups (Defra, statutory bodies and funders).
- The importance of measuring the impact of support groups: at the individual farm/family level, and the broader social value – using this work to pitch to these three categories.
- Producing a ‘wiring diagram’ to show how and where support groups connect and fit together.
- Enhancing the networking, exchange of information and access to funding for support

groups.

- Data and statistics do not always represent the health issues facing farming communities – having a dialogue with Public Health England about the proxies they collect.
- The emerging findings and today's discussion suggests support groups should not always be focussing on problems or crisis (symptoms), but on causes, triggers, prevention and early intervention. This may also mean support groups helping farmers who are not in dire straits and not the most successful (those in the middle), partners, and young people (particularly around the farm succession and the transition within the life of a family farm).
- ***The final report will be distributed in mid-December with a Forum meeting in London to discuss it, planned for mid-January. Details of the next meeting will be circulated by Philip Wynn and Gordon Gatward shortly.***

Appendix D: Map of the Distribution of Support Networks



- 1 Beds and Cambs Rural Support Group
- 2 Borderlands Rural Chaplaincy / Herefordshire Rural Hub
- 3 Borderlands Rural Chaplaincy / Shropshire Rural Support
- 4 Cheshire Agricultural Chaplaincy
- 5 Dartmoor Hill Farm Project / Exmoor Hill Farming
- 6 Derbyshire Agricultural Chaplaincy (DAC) / The Farming Life Centre
- 7 Exmoor Hill Farming
- 8 Farm Cornwall
- 9 Field Nurse
- 10 Gloucestershire Farming Friends
- 11 Growing Well / The Farmer Network
- 12 Lincolnshire Rural Support Network
- 13 Nottinghamshire Rural Support
- 14 The Farmer Network / Yorkshire Rural Support Network
- 15 The Farming Life Centre
- 16 The YANA Project
- 17 Tir Dewi
- 18 Tir Dewi / DPJ Foundation
- 19 Upper Teesdale Agricultural Support Service