



## **Hope CIC Community Farm Project**

Hope Against Poverty Community Interest Company (CIC) is excited to propose a new Community Farm project in partnership with Cambridgeshire County Council, with the support of South Cambridgeshire District Council. This project aims to bring communities together, create a positive impact in their lives, and provide healthy, locally-sourced meals to our community and find solutions for social isolation. Additionally, it will enhance the profitability of our Hope In a Box business, ensuring the sustainability of Hope CIC. The Community Farm will be established on a generously provided 4.5-acre land (under negotiations), which will serve as the foundation for a variety of sustainable agricultural activities. This project aligns with our commitment to poverty alleviation and community empowerment by fostering self-reliance and food security.

### **1. Partnership with Cambridgeshire County Council**

We are grateful to Cambridgeshire County Council for their generous offer of land for our Community Farm project. This partnership reflects a shared commitment to community development and the betterment of the lives of local residents. The land is currently being offered for 1 year, which we are in discussions to have this secured for a longer term. The support of the Parish Council in our project will help us in these discussions.

### **2. Project Objectives**

- To create a community-focused, sustainable agricultural hub.
- To supply healthy, locally-sourced meals to the community.
- To engage and empower community members in farm activities.
- To enhance the financial sustainability of Hope CIC through increased profits.

### **3. Expected Outcomes**

- Increased community cohesion and a sense of ownership.
- Access to fresh, healthy, and affordable produce for local residents.
- Training and skill development opportunities for community members.
- A positive impact on the profitability of Hope In a Box (fruit and vegetable box).

### **4. Benefits to the Community**

The Community Farm will bring several benefits to the community:

- Access to fresh, locally-grown, and affordable produce.
- Educational opportunities for community members on sustainable farming practices.
- Job creation and training in agriculture.
- A stronger sense of community and belonging.

### **Community Involvement**

- **Meaningful Engagement:** Local residents will be actively involved in the entire farming process, from planting to harvesting. This engagement goes beyond traditional farming; it



fosters a sense of community ownership and pride as individuals contribute to the development and sustenance of the farm.

- Skill Development and Education: Workshops and training programmes will be offered to community members, providing valuable skills in agriculture, fostering entrepreneurship, and enhancing employability, with the possibility of offering funded apprenticeships, which supports the government's skills agenda.

#### Key Activities

- Developing partnerships and exploring further opportunities for collaboration
- Advanced educational programmes, workshops, and accredited courses
- Community gardens and expanded ecotherapy initiatives
- Advocacy and outreach
- Assess and optimise operations

### **5. Sustainability and Profit Margin Enhancement**

The Community Farm project will contribute to the sustainability of Hope CIC through several means:

- Increased supply of locally-sourced produce for Hope In a Box, reducing procurement costs.
- Revenue generation through the sale of surplus produce to local markets and restaurants.
- Diversification of income sources to support other Hope CIC initiatives - Food Project in Cambourne and mobile food hub (Hope on the Go).
- Implement sustainable farming practices, including permaculture, reducing environmental impact. This includes organic farming techniques, water conservation, and the use of renewable energy sources, setting a standard for responsible agriculture in the region.
- Serve as a model for sustainable, small-scale farming in the region, demonstrating that it is not only possible but also economically viable. This aligns with global efforts to promote sustainable practices and combat climate change.

### **6. Project Implementation**

- Establish a Hope CIC Community Farm team for oversight and management.
- Develop a farm business plan, including crop selection and production timelines.
- Engage the community in farm planning and encourage participation.
- Secure necessary resources, such as seeds, equipment, and infrastructure.
- Implement sustainable farming practices, including organic and permaculture techniques.
- Establish marketing and distribution channels for produce.

### **7. Resource Requirements**

To successfully implement the Community Farm project, we will require resources such as:

- Seeds, equipment, and infrastructure (temporary) for farming.
- Skilled farm staff and volunteers.
- Funding for initial setup and operational costs.



- Marketing and distribution resources.
- Sustainable power and water.

## **8. Timeline**

The project is expected to be implemented over the course of 5 years, with ongoing management and development thereafter.

## **9. Monitoring and Evaluation**

Regular monitoring and evaluation will be carried out to assess the progress and impact of the project. Key performance indicators will include crop yield, community engagement, and financial sustainability.

## **10. Conclusion**

The Community Farm project, established in partnership with Cambridgeshire County Council and supported by South Cambridgeshire District Council, represents an exciting opportunity to engage our community, provide healthy meals, and enhance the profitability of Hope CIC. We are committed to working collaboratively to bring this project to create lasting, positive change in our community. Together, we will cultivate a brighter future.