

Social Farming

23rd November 2016

Social Beneficial farming

Vejle, Denmark



Brian Smyth,

Leitrim Development Co.

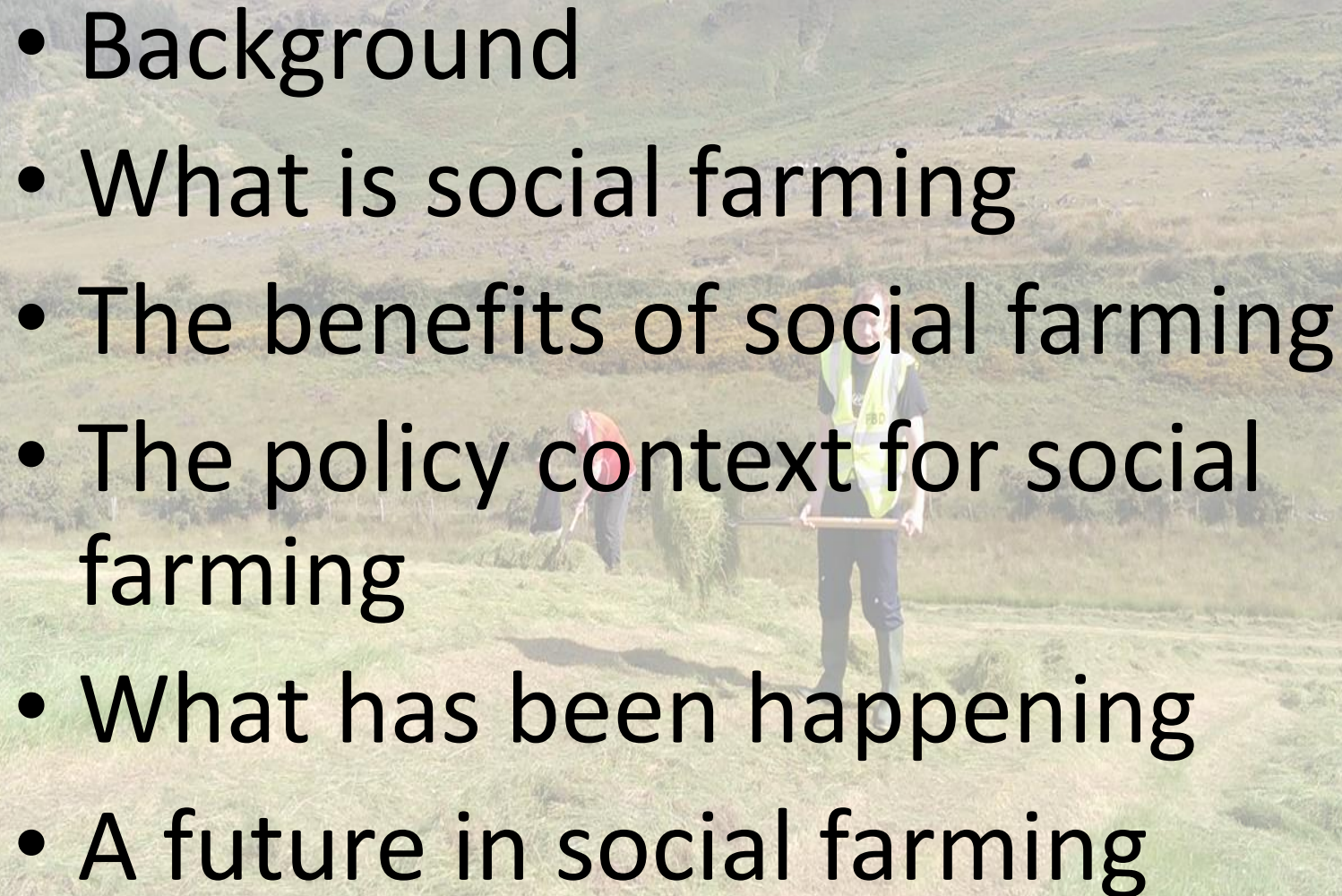


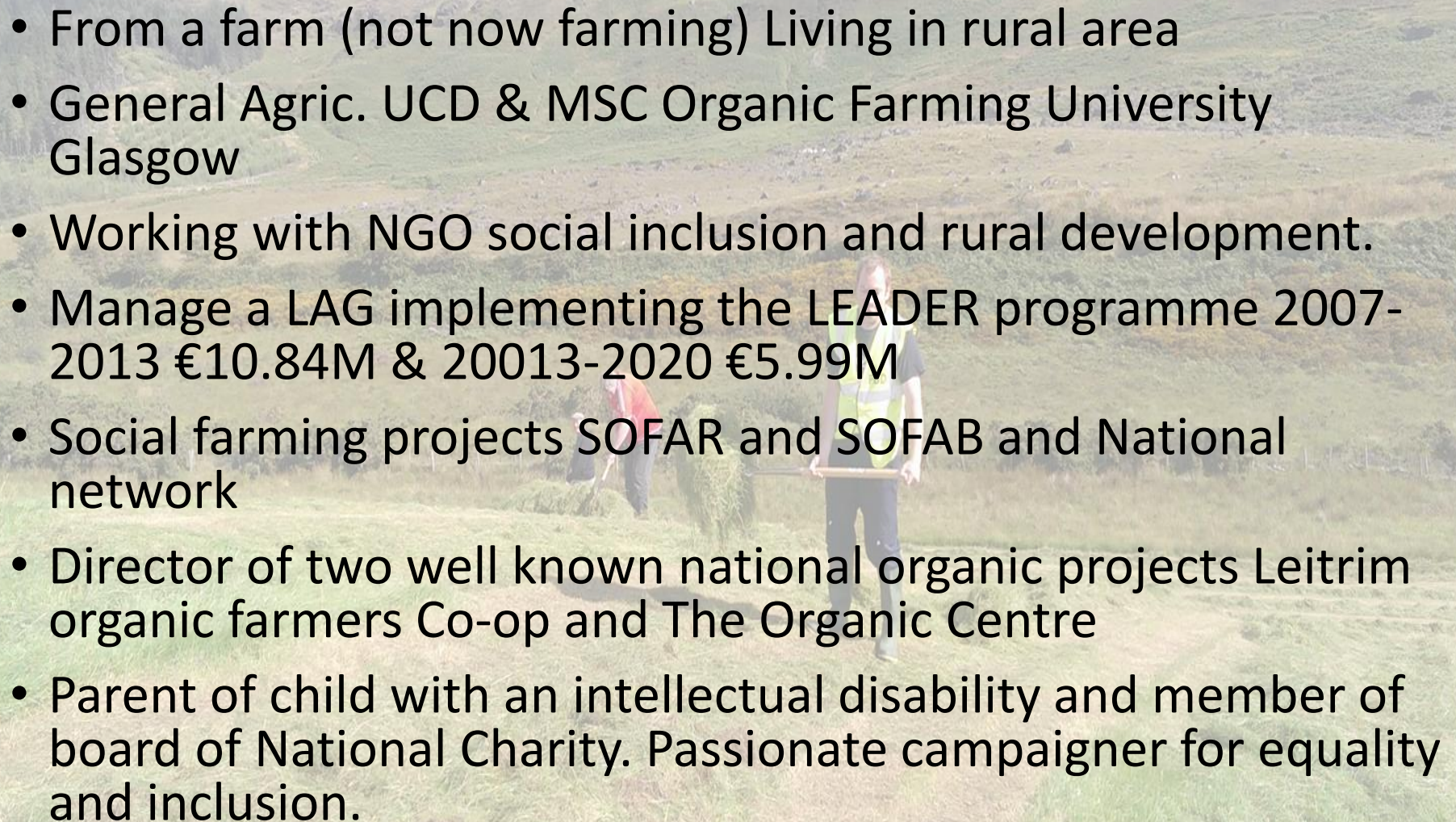
www.socialfarmingacrossborders.org

@lairdhse06

www.ldco.ie

@leitrimdevco

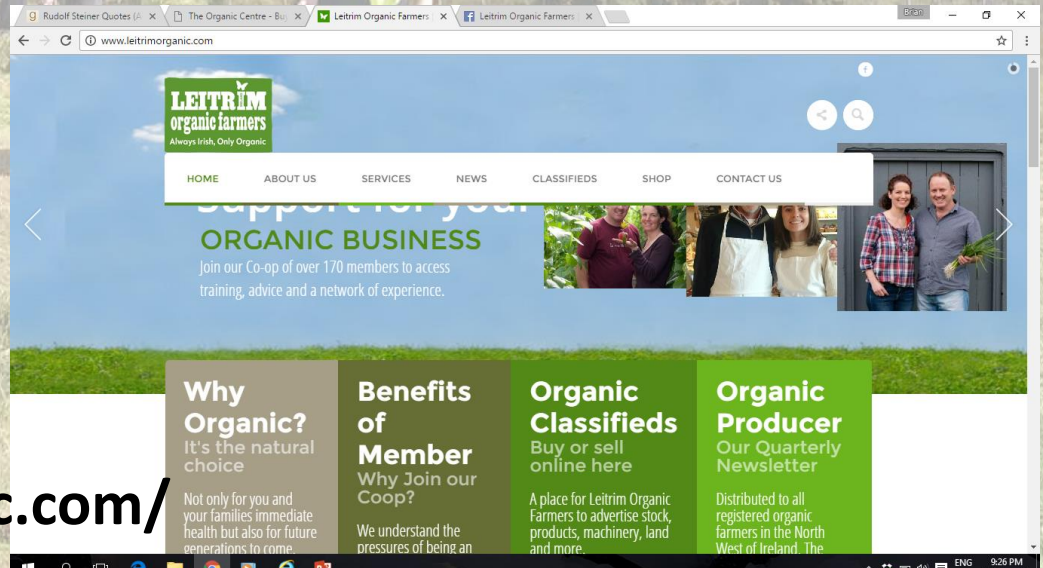
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- A person wearing a yellow safety vest and dark clothing stands in a grassy field, holding a long-handled tool. In the background, another person is visible working in the field. The landscape features rolling green hills under a cloudy sky.
- Background
 - What is social farming
 - The benefits of social farming
 - The policy context for social farming
 - What has been happening
 - A future in social farming

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- A person wearing a high-visibility yellow vest and dark clothing stands in a grassy field. In the background, there are rolling green hills under a cloudy sky. Another person is visible further back, working in the field.
- From a farm (not now farming) Living in rural area
 - General Agric. UCD & MSC Organic Farming University Glasgow
 - Working with NGO social inclusion and rural development.
 - Manage a LAG implementing the LEADER programme 2007-2013 €10.84M & 20013-2020 €5.99M
 - Social farming projects SOFAR and SOFAB and National network
 - Director of two well known national organic projects Leitrim organic farmers Co-op and The Organic Centre
 - Parent of child with an intellectual disability and member of board of National Charity. Passionate campaigner for equality and inclusion.

<http://www.theorganiccentre.ie/>



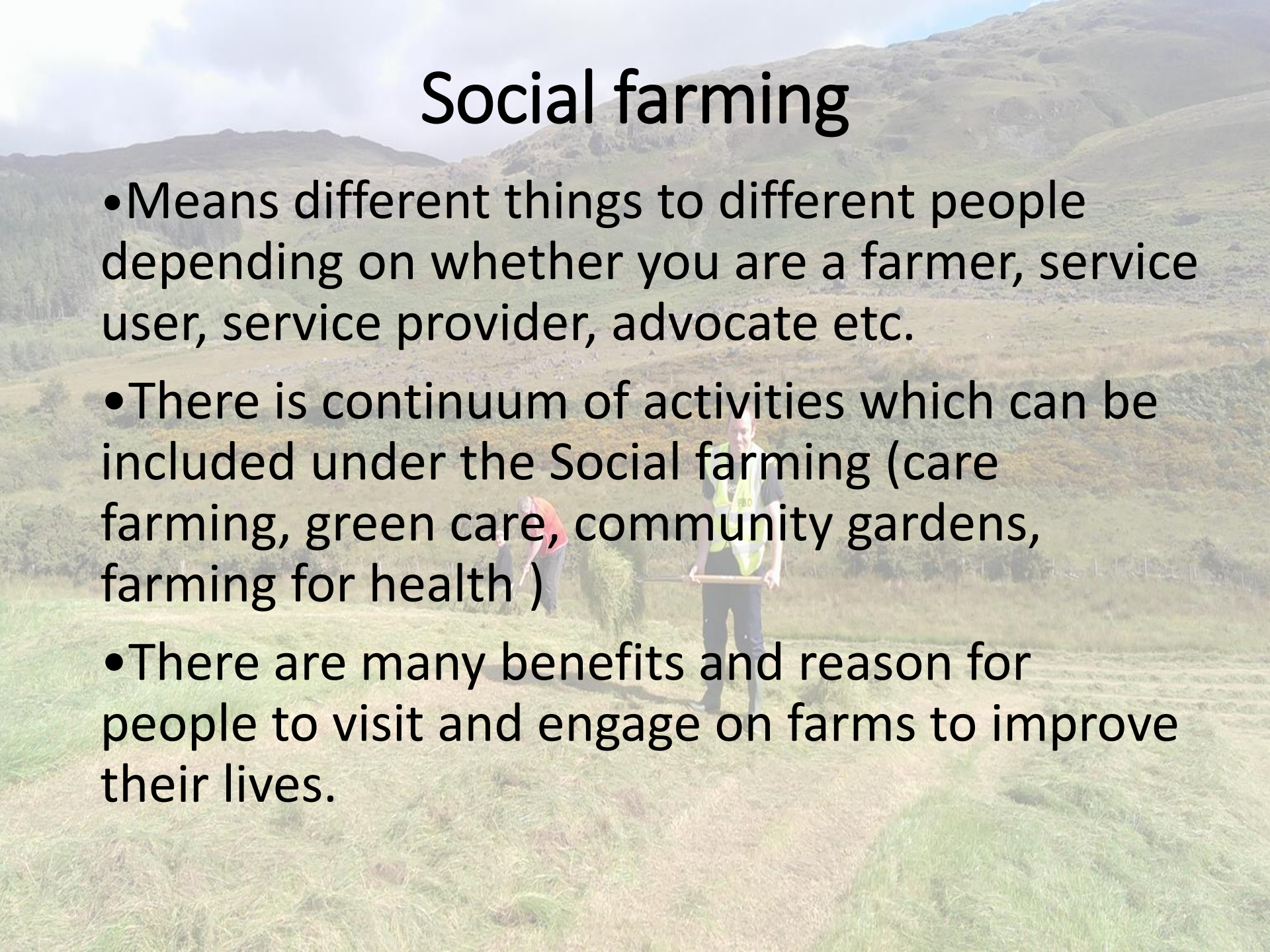
LEITRIM
organic farmers
Always Irish, Only Organic



<http://www.leitrimorganic.com/>

Social farming

- Means different things to different people depending on whether you are a farmer, service user, service provider, advocate etc.
- There is continuum of activities which can be included under the Social farming (care farming, green care, community gardens, farming for health)
- There are many benefits and reason for people to visit and engage on farms to improve their lives.



SS

Pre-2006

Long history of institutional farms/ gardens run by religious and state bodies

2006-9

EU SoFar Project networking

90 social farms in Ireland – almost all institutional facilities, only 2 family farms

2009-11

Community of Practice Group emerged from SoFAR
Proposals for funding developed by CoP members but little success

Networking enabled proposal to EU INTERREG in 2010

2011-14

EU-funded SOFAB Project (2011-14)

66 service users experienced social farming for first time on 20 family farms in ROI and NI

60 people trained on 30 hours course in social farming

Farmers' Organisation established from SoFAB Project

2015-2016

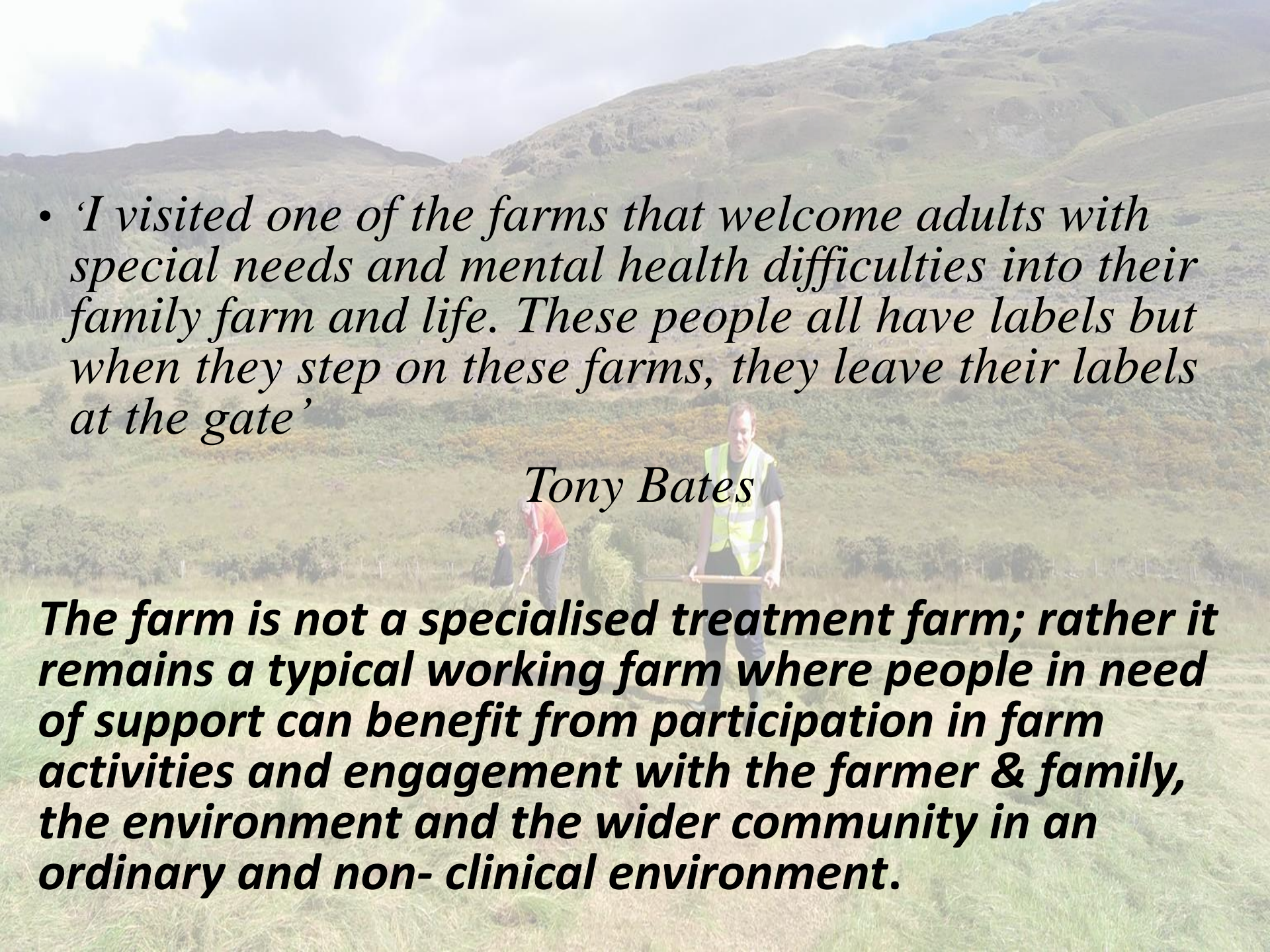
Department of Agriculture and Food capital funding for Social farms and investment in Social farming network and practice.

Social Farming type services in Ireland, 2007 (n=133)



- Industrialisation of farming. Loosing it value in society? Farmers
- Digital age people are disconnecting from each other and from the environment.
- Media age “Post Truth” connection with reality?.



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- *‘I visited one of the farms that welcome adults with special needs and mental health difficulties into their family farm and life. These people all have labels but when they step on these farms, they leave their labels at the gate’*

Tony Bates

The farm is not a specialised treatment farm; rather it remains a typical working farm where people in need of support can benefit from participation in farm activities and engagement with the farmer & family, the environment and the wider community in an ordinary and non- clinical environment.

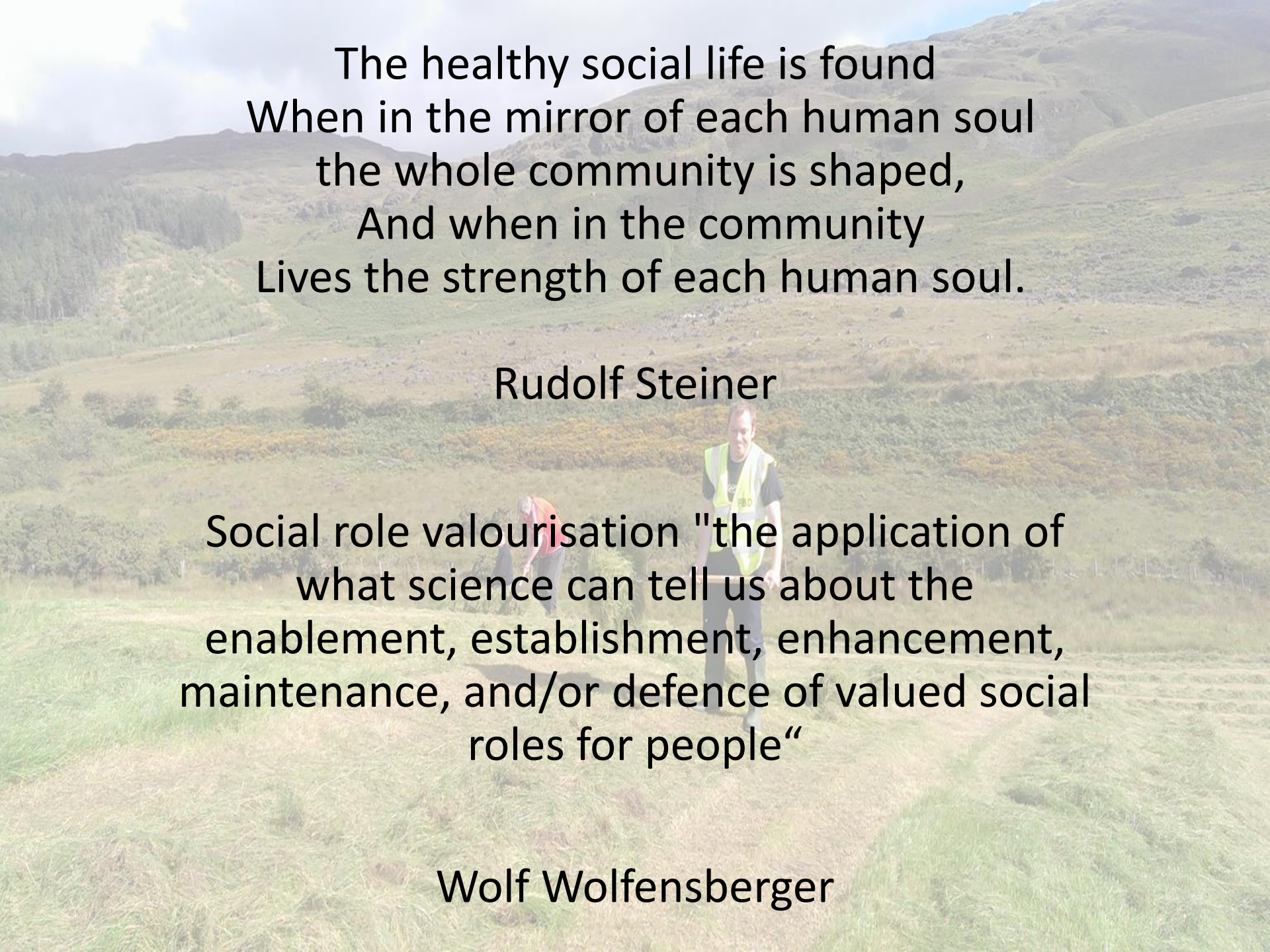
Valued social roles



What do people need / want in their lives

- Someone to love and to be loved – relationships **connections**
- Something to do, a job various roles and engaging activities etc. **valued roles**
- Something to look forward to, something to strive towards. **To exercise their choices.**



The background image shows a vast, rolling landscape of green hills under a cloudy sky. In the middle ground, a person wearing a bright yellow high-visibility vest and dark clothing stands facing the camera. To their left, another person in a red shirt is bent over, seemingly working on the ground. The overall scene is peaceful and natural, with the text overlaid in a clean, black, sans-serif font.


The healthy social life is found
When in the mirror of each human soul
the whole community is shaped,
And when in the community
Lives the strength of each human soul.


Rudolf Steiner

Social role valourisation "the application of
what science can tell us about the
enablement, establishment, enhancement,
maintenance, and/or defence of valued social
roles for people"

Wolf Wolfensberger

Beneficiaries of social farming

- People with disabilities (physical, sensory, intellectual)
 - Addiction recovery (drugs, alcohol)
 - Children & Young people (some don't "fit")
 - Prisoners (Probation)
 - Long-term unemployed.
 - Patients with terminal illness
 - People with or recovering from mental ill health /Burn out
 - Older people and those with dementia
 - Farmers & Farm families
 - Communities and society as a whole.
- 
- A man wearing a high-visibility yellow vest over a dark t-shirt and dark trousers stands in a grassy field. He is holding a long-handled tool, possibly a spade or a hoe, horizontally in front of him. In the background, there are rolling green hills under a clear sky. Another person is visible in the distance, working in the field.

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- A person wearing a yellow safety vest and dark clothing stands in a grassy field. In the background, there are rolling hills under a cloudy sky. Another person is visible in the distance, working in the field.
- *‘Social farming is an innovative approach that brings together two concepts: multipurpose farming and social services/health care at local level. It makes a contribution in the ambit of agricultural production to the well-being and the social integration of people with particular needs’*

- **EU Economic and Social Committee
(Dec. 2012)**

A gateway to Community inclusion through relationships on a farm



Release inherent assets and value of those assets
Intangible

Social farming

- The farm as platform or space for individual growth and development. Provide stability in structures, In the non physical (time rhythms and routines), social activities and connections, The focus on caring for plants and animals helps to stimulate the personal force or life force of the person and helps facilitate and stimulate solid progressive social care, equality and integration.
- The farmer (family) helps the person and facilities and stimulates them to look at the many and varied perspective which the farm and the wider community around it provides for improving their lives.
- An innovative way of re-linking the creation of economic and social values, to introduce new principles, new activities and new options for people in time of crises and to allow them to integrate and become a part of their community with a valued social role.
- A wide range of aspects to social farming



Activities which can take place

- Rehabilitation and therapy (professional)
- Vocational training and skills sampling
- Work readiness and Work activities
- Inclusion (social and community interaction)
- Educational services
- Day occupational services
- Recreational services (physical activity)

Must all be based on personal outcomes and choices

Some benefits

1. Confidence
2. Health-Mental & Physical
3. New skills and new employment
4. Personal independence
5. Choice
6. Social interaction
7. Community interaction and inclusion
8. Caring for rather than being cared for
9. A better life.



Public and private value from farms

- Economic activity generating income and profit
 - Creating and sustaining employment.
 - Food production
 - Fuel / Energy production
- Conservation / biodiversity environmental goods for society.
 - Clean water (Public goods) water framework /
 - Tourism / Leisure, Outdoor recreation, Access etc.
 - Carbon sequestration / forestry
 - **Health and Social Care -Social farming**

Rural Development

- **RDP 2014/2020 social inclusion, cooperation, vocational training, Diversification of agriculture, entrepreneurship in rural areas investments aids, start-up and management supports, promotion of quality products, co-operation etc.**
- **European Innovation Partnership, social innovation and transition, brokerage knowledge and a diverse path to innovate in rural areas**
- **A strong commitment for innovation to promote prosperity and new forms of rural economic activity.**





The benefits of social farming

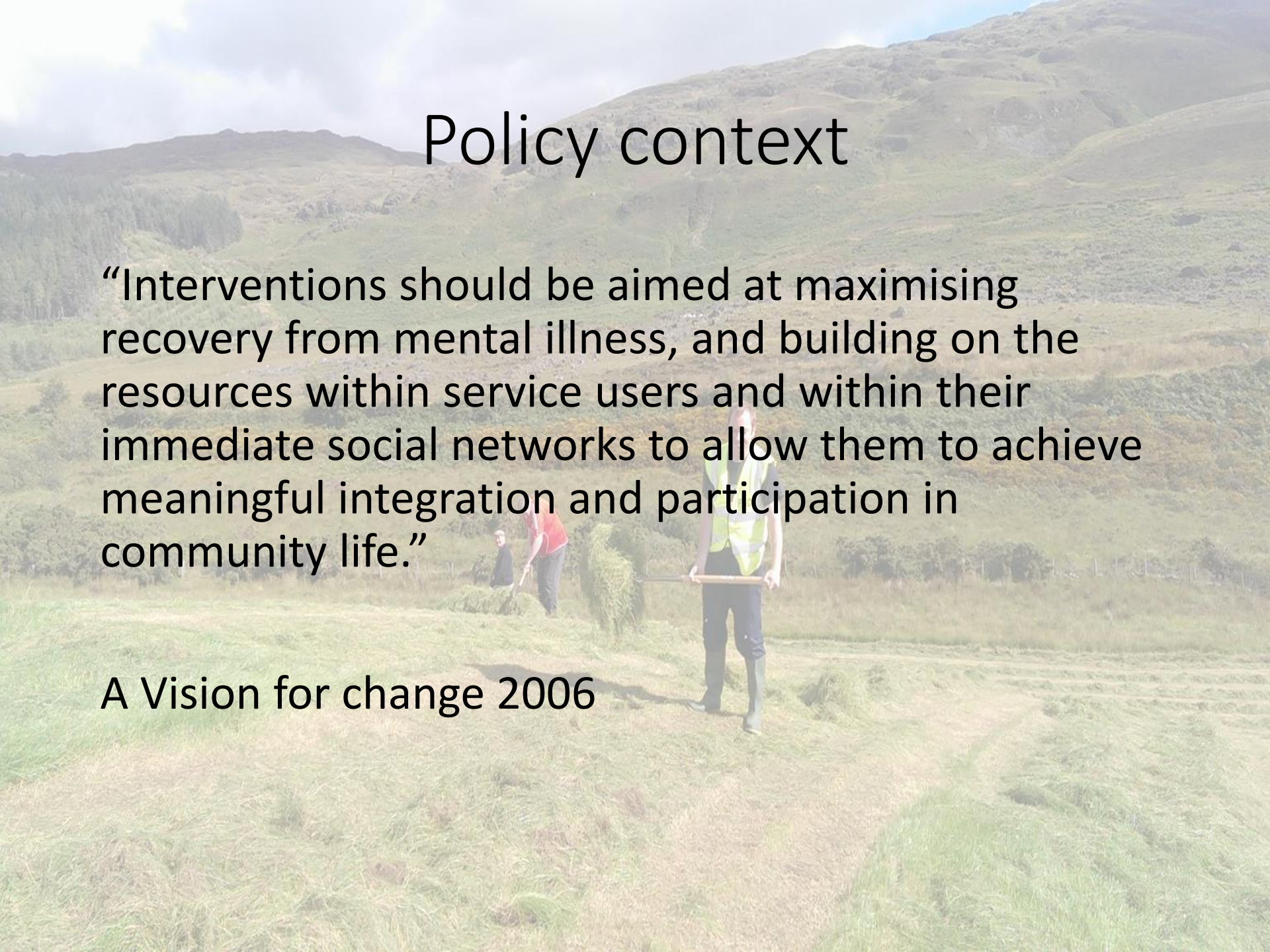
- Connecting people
- New opportunities, multifunctional farms, diversification, skills development, increase inclusion
- Improving lives Physical, confidence, self esteem, motivation, wellbeing, worth, personal responsibility, Mental wellness reduces anger, tension confusion,
- A values based approach to linking many sectors and people for the benefit of citizens who wish to engage and interact with nature through farming / horticulture, through farmers and their community.



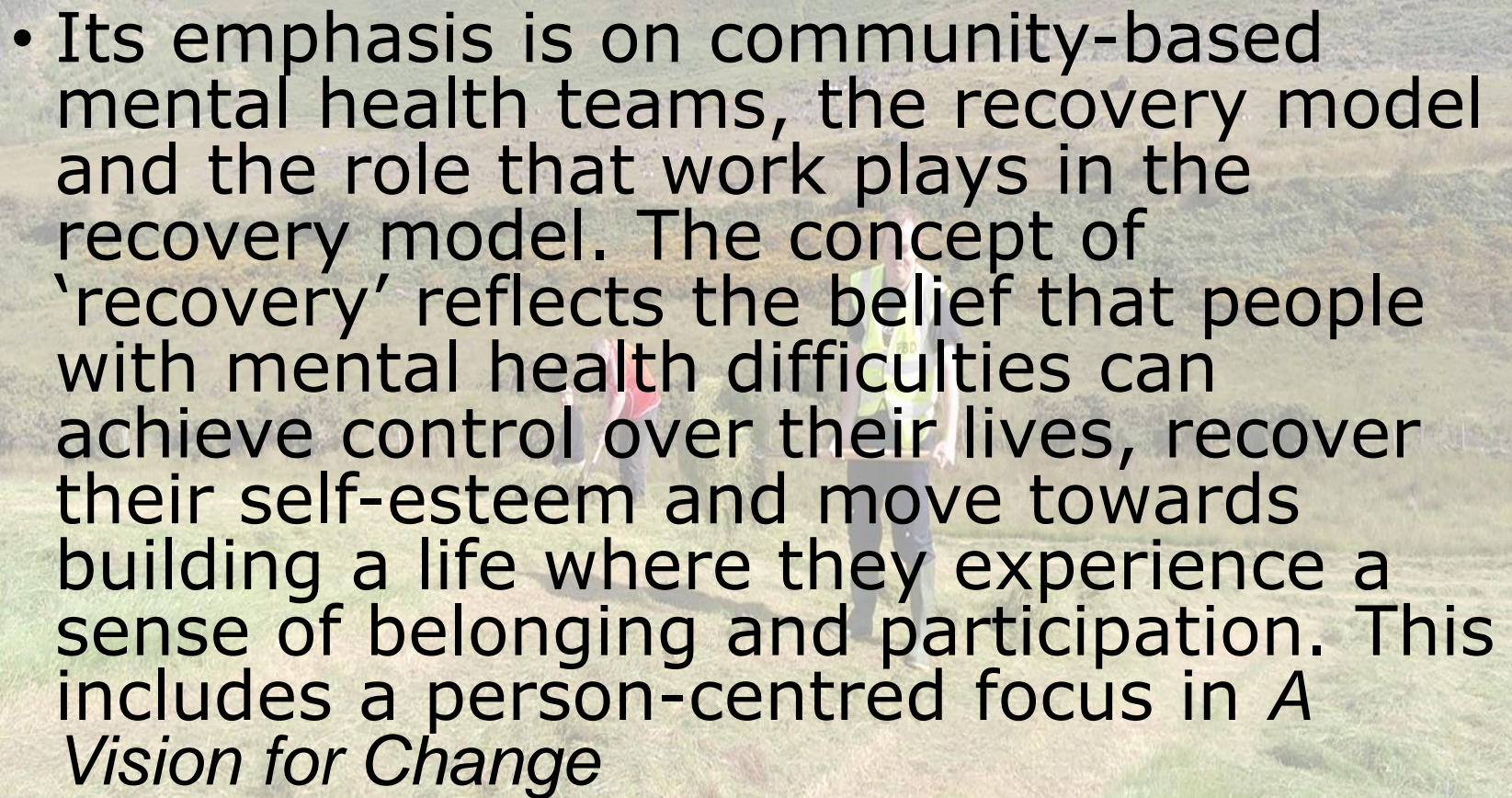
Policy context

“Interventions should be aimed at maximising recovery from mental illness, and building on the resources within service users and within their immediate social networks to allow them to achieve meaningful integration and participation in community life.”

A Vision for change 2006





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- Its emphasis is on community-based mental health teams, the recovery model and the role that work plays in the recovery model. The concept of 'recovery' reflects the belief that people with mental health difficulties can achieve control over their lives, recover their self-esteem and move towards building a life where they experience a sense of belonging and participation. This includes a person-centred focus in A *Vision for Change*



SoFar Research project

- Italy University of Pisa Francesco de Iacovo and ARSA
 - Ireland University College Dublin Deirdre O Connor
 - France QAP Decisions Gerard Assouline
- Belgium Flemish Support Centre for Green care University of Ghent
- Holland Institute of organic Agriculture Wageningen University
 - Germany Forschungsinstitut Fur Biologischen Landbau
 - Slovenia university of Lubljana

[http//.sofar.unipi.it](http://.sofar.unipi.it)

Social Farming Across Borders Project (2011-14)

EU INTERREG IVA Programme

Priority 2: Cooperation for a more sustainable cross-border region

- **Duration:** 3 years – Oct. 2011 to Sept. 2014
- **Partners:**
 - University College Dublin (Lead)
 - Queen's University Belfast
 - Leitrim Development Company
- **Grant:** €689,826





Activities of the Project

- Awareness raising
- Networking
- Piloting
- Training
- Dissemination



NEWSLETTER

Spring 2013 | Edition 3

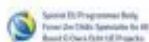
Social Farming Newsletter – Issue No. 3

Costs and Benefits of Social Farming



Report of the Social Farming Across Borders (SoFAB) Project

September 2014



Social Farming Handbook

Guidelines for considering, planning, delivering and using social farming services in Ireland and Northern Ireland

Based mainly on the experience and lessons of the Social Farming Across Borders (SoFAB) Project (2011-14)



New Opportunities + Connecting People + Improving Lives



Where to now

National support Centre for Ireland €400,000

- Multi dimensional
- Many partners stakeholder
- Different needs
- Complex and challenging

- People
- Relationships
- Values



National network and support

- Developing the concept, practice and activities
- Linking the various sectors and stakeholders
- Developing commissioning pathways.
- 30-35 in ROI 15 in NI
- Commissioning beginning.
- Policy change happening ?
- Training course for farmers developed.
- More farmers interested all of the time
- Funding from Departments of Agriculture NI and ROI



Commissioners /Services

- Developing pathways to commissioning
- Innovation in provision and approach to choices and person centred (supported self direction)
- Engaging and relating with community providers Social Farmers & others.
- Developing mechanisms for engaging with and funding such community options.
- Supporting network & examining standards
- Implementing change and policy.

Support agencies

- Informing people –knowledge base, practice, what happens, what are the benefits, implement Government policy
- How to support and nurture rural development innovation for social inclusion and farming Communities.
- Supporting farmers and farm families, particularly smaller farms
- Supporting and developing relationships and partnerships to respond to needs of individuals and communities.
- Engaging and facilitating stakeholders to take part
- Informing & Influencing policies and structures to support such initiative and activities

Linking various land based initiatives very important

Policy makers, researchers,

- Redefining resources
- Making decisions,
- Listening, consulting,
- Defining new structures and arrangements
- Agreeing, deciding and Implementing policies
- Creating supportive frameworks and “environment” for such activities and innovations





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