

The Farmer Network

A photograph of a rural landscape in the Yorkshire Dales. In the foreground, several sheep of various breeds, including large brown and grey ones and smaller white ones, are standing on a large, mossy rock. In the middle ground, a group of about ten people, including men and women in various outdoor clothing, are standing together and looking towards the sheep. The background shows a green valley with rolling hills, a stone wall, and scattered trees under a clear sky.

A team of farmers working to encourage and support farmer collaboration amongst its members in Cumbria and the Yorkshire Dales

The Farmer Network

6 Board members
(2 Cumb, 2Yorks, MD + 1)

Yorks Dales Council
10 elected members
+ others co-opted

Cumbria Council
10 elected members
+ others co-opted

Head office
Admin/finance etc.

Yorks Dales Farmer
coordinators

Cumbria Farmer
coordinators



Main Principles

- Not for profit company
- Owned by farmers who work for farmers
- Is run as a large family
- Responsibility for main decisions about what work is done lies with elected farmers & NOT directed from head office
- Needs farmer commitment
- Head office implement what farmers ask and decide how to do this, using farmer coordinators

Core Aims of the Company

Helping to maintain and develop a viable farming community in Cumbria and the Yorkshire Dales

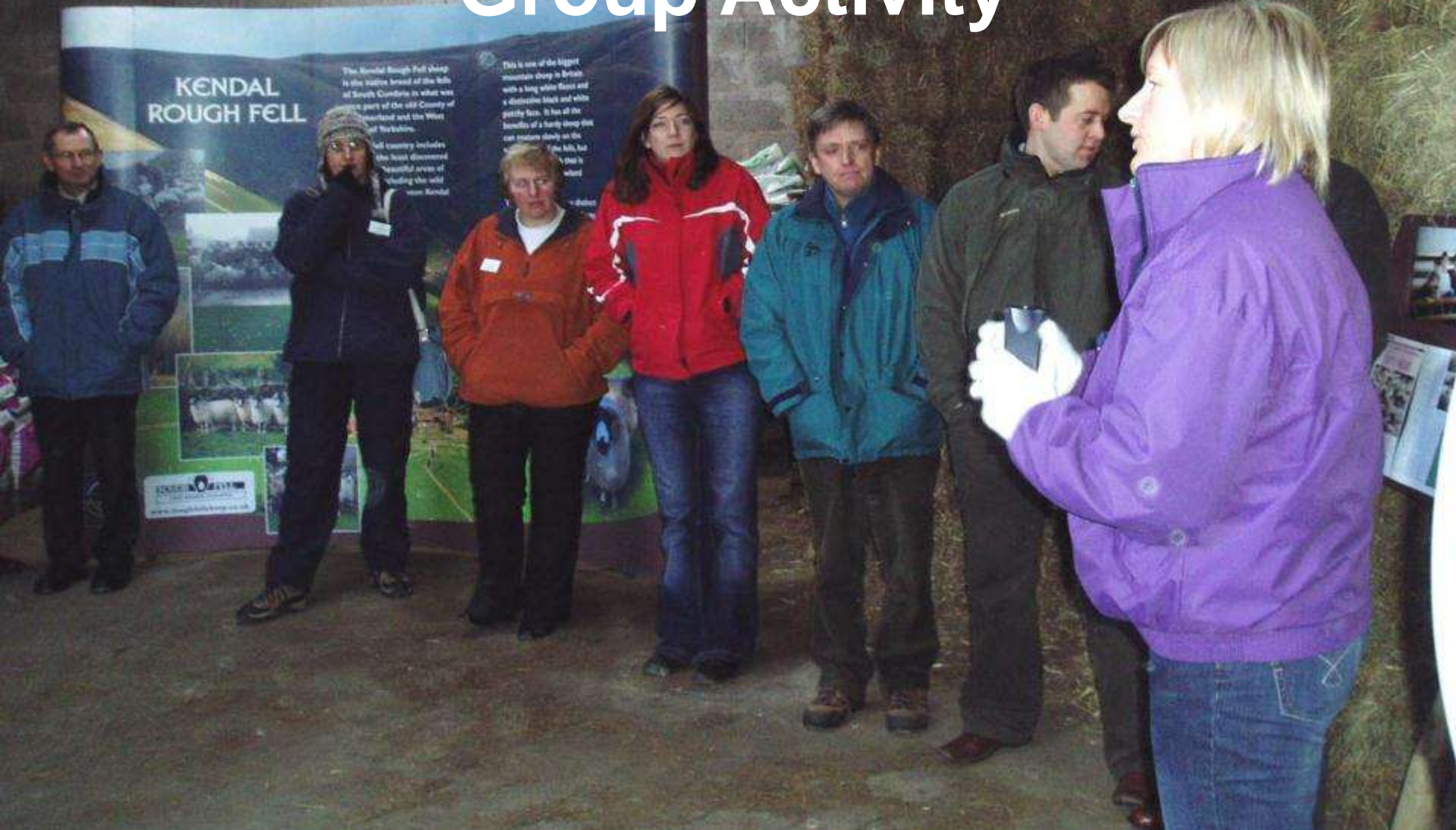
Helping to maximise rural income via food production and other activity

To support, inform and educate

To raise the profile of farming



Stimulating and supporting Group Activity



**Buying inputs and services
cheaper**





Help Farmers keep up to date

Help groups apply for funding and manage projects for groups



Organise Farm Demonstrations and meetings for Agencies/Private Companies



Support Young People in Farming













UDDERgold



Help Members with Office Paperwork



Educating the Public





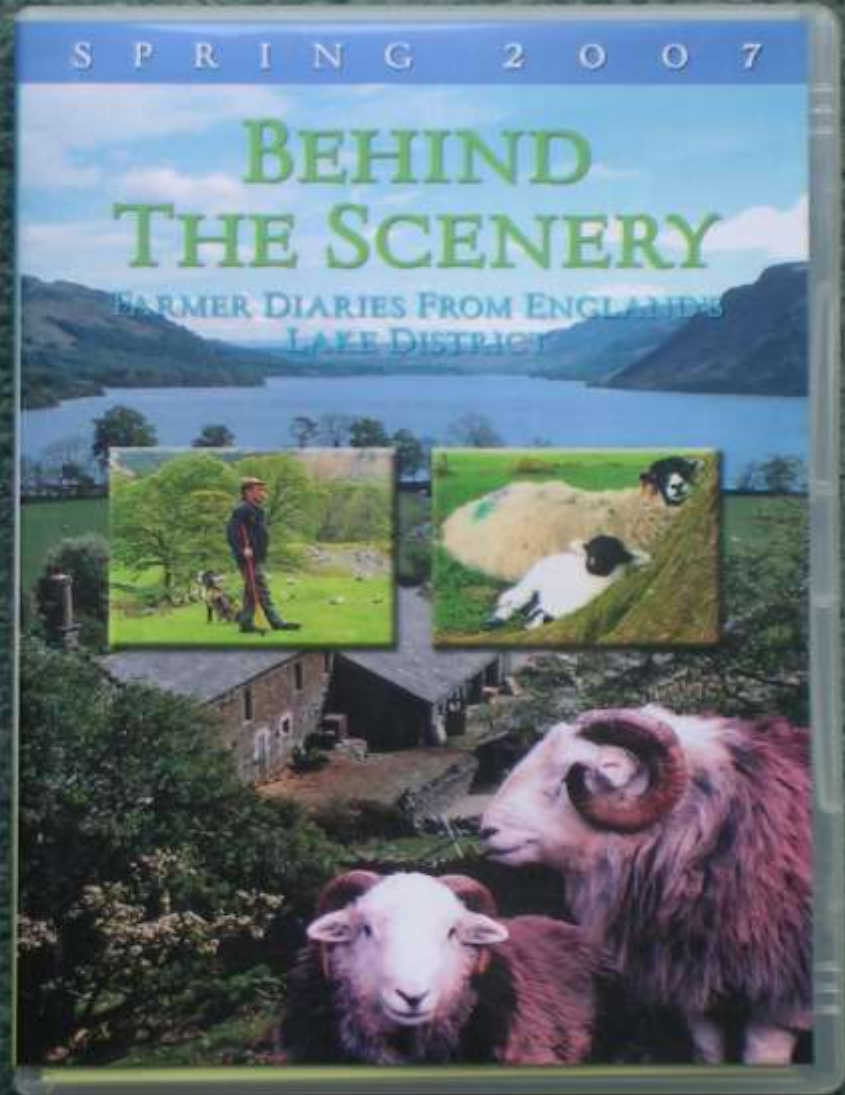


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Your Brewery Your Beer

JENNINGS
Pure Lake

an

**Filmed and
produced
DVD's
showing farm
life in each
season on 2
mountain
farms in the
Lake District**





Advice and support to individual members



Lessons Learned

- Ideally need 3 years funding to start in a new area:
 - to allow farmers to realise their role/responsibilities
 - get the right farmers involved
 - For head office/manager to learn the correct approach (to support and not lead)
- Need cash in the bank to fund many projects
- Finances always tight; need income streams from sponsors and commercial activity, plus membership.
- Highly valued by members/agencies once established