

OUR CONSERVATION GRAZING SERVICE 2025



MAYDENCROFT MANOR

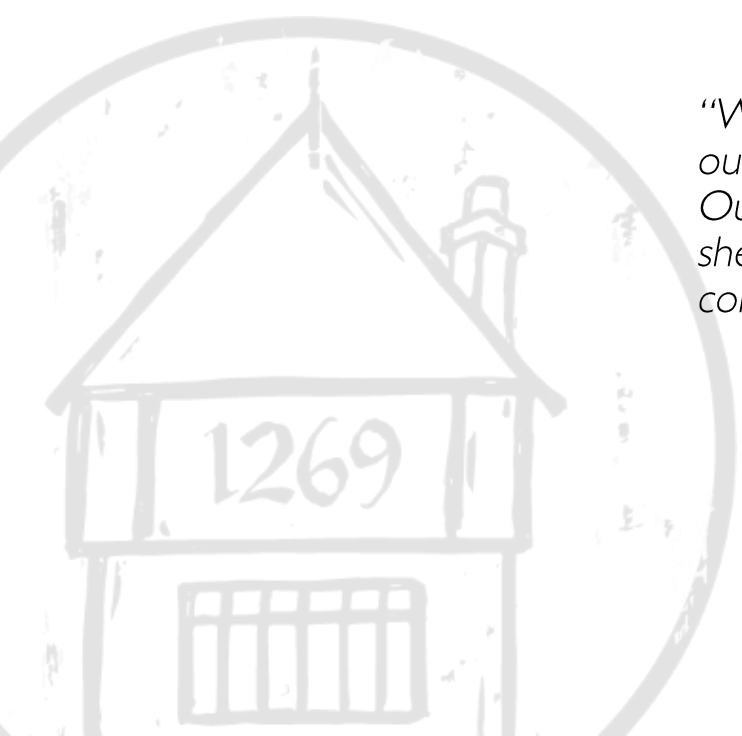
NATIVE BREEDS FARM

WHO WE ARE

Set in the North Hertfordshire countryside, Maydencroft Manor Farm is family run, assured by Red Tractor, and home to English Longhorn cattle and native breed sheep.

We are passionate about the heritage native breeds reared here and our sustainable, low input, high welfare farming methods. We feel very fortunate to be part of the story of a farm with such a fascinating history, and a great sense of responsibility for the future of the countryside and the rural community around us.

"We are passionate about the heritage native breeds we rear and our sustainable, low input, high welfare, traditional farming methods. Our pedigree herd of English Longhorn cattle and heritage breed sheep graze across Hertfordshire on our regional meadows, conservation sites and historic parkland."



Tom Williams

Managing Partner





OUR HISTORY

Maydencroft Manor has a remarkable history with records dating back to 1269. It is a former royal open hall house owned by the English royal family from Medieval until Tudor times, a number of whom visited and stayed, including Queen Isabella and later King Henry VIII. Henry VIII used it for hunting and hawking and was reputedly rescued from drowning in a ditch when at Maydencroft.



Bunyan's barn on our farm is a sixteenth century barn of special architectural and historic interest. It is associated with John Bunyan, who is reputed to have preached here to clandestine gatherings of Baptists. These days the barn hosts our own events to support local charities.



THE MAYDENCROFT FAMILY

The farm is part of the wider Maydencroft family of businesses. All sharing a goal to ensure everything we do has a positive impact on the environment and the people within it.



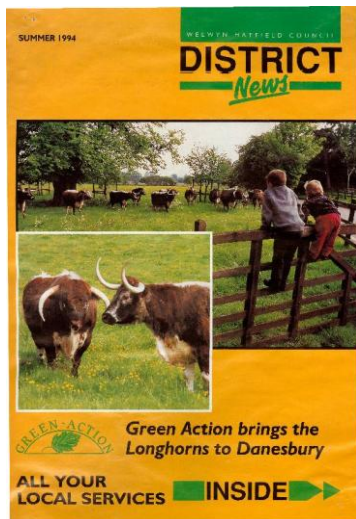
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THE NUMBERS

- 60 longhorn pedigree breeding females, split into Spring and Autumn calvers
- 200 head of longhorns overall, specifically reared for public sites
- The Maydencroft herd of Longhorn cattle was established in 1982
- A small flock of Hebridean sheep
- 1000 acres of conservation grazing sites spread across Hertfordshire
- 150 acres of land around Maydencroft Manor, all within environmental schemes
- 10+ conservation grazing clients from charity, commercial, public and private sectors



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Our longhorns have been specifically bred to graze on public sites since 1994 and our conservation grazing 'clients' spread from Bishops Stortford to Bricket Wood and from Hitchin to Harlow.

CONSERVATION GRAZING SERVICE

What makes our service unique is that we train our own herd of Longhorn cattle for conservation grazing on sites with public access. Plus, longhorns are noted for being particularly docile and relaxed around people and dogs so the same space can be enjoyed by all.



We take a more formal approach to grazing land, by agreeing to a specification which meets the demands of Natural England. This means we can give our partners and clients a bespoke conservation grazing service. We're able to meet environmental and biodiversity targets, and we pride ourselves in always being friendly and informative in our approach.

Regular site visits can be expected, with our farm team carrying out livestock checks. But that's not all; we're also able to educate friends groups and regular visitors how to do it too. We build relationships on the sites we graze, and often see an increase in visitor numbers as a result of the new residents.





To be able to give the best possible service, and to meet conservation grazing specifications to our utmost ability, we have built a state of the art livestock barn at Maydencroft Manor.

THE FARM

Part funded by Natural England and opened in 2022, Jubilee Barn houses up to 200 cattle. Clients are very welcome to visit at any time.





CONTACT DETAILS

For escaped livestock and other emergencies

farm@maydencroft.co.uk

07821 111653

Chris Oakley, Working Farm Manager

Chris was born and bred into farming. He started his career in 2003 managing young stock on a dairy herd.

After studying agriculture at Shuttleworth College, Bedfordshire, Chris went on to join the family farm in North Hertfordshire where he ran a contracting team, fencing and hay making.

In 2011 Chris secured a tenancy on his own farm where he built up a herd of suckler cows, breeding sheep and fattening pigs. Working with livestock for so long, Chris has built up a vast knowledge on animal health, welfare and nutrition.

Whilst on his own farm Chris and his wife also ran a successful farm shop and butchery, raising animals right through from farm to fork. Chris learned a lot about meat production and did much of his own butchery, specialising in lamb and pork.

Chris joined Maydencroft at the beginning of 2018 and brings a great deal of expertise to the team.

When Chris isn't farming (which isn't often!), he enjoys many sports including shooting, fishing and spending time with his two young boys.

chris.oakley@maydencroft.co.uk 07821 111653



Simon Jarratt BSc (Hons), Farm Assistant

Simon has always had a love of animals and decided to go to university, where he read Zoo Biology. During his time at Nottingham Trent, he went on a placement year on a diverse farm that had cattle, sheep, chickens, goats and small rodents too. Working there, he focussed on farming and producing healthy local food and undertook his dissertation looking into the effect of 'chicken tractors' on the health of chicken's feet, when compared to standard free range. Looking into ways to improve the environment and welfare of our food has become a passion of Simon's. This is developing in his role at Maydencroft with our conversation grazing. Where we are currently developing and maintaining pasture ecosystems with our native breed livestock with our English Longhorn cattle and Hebridean sheep.

In his spare time, he likes to build or make anything from furniture, to little wooden creatures, through to woodcarving. Simon also likes to stay active with climbing and running being a big part of his life.

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