

Charity Collection Submission – Deen City Farm

Hello

I am writing from Deen City Farm and Riding School to ask if we can be considered for a collection at a home match next season.

We are Wimbledon's community Farm and a registered charity – we have been based in SW19 for almost 40 years, and receive over 60,000 visitors a year, mostly local people coming from within the borough of Merton. Many local people who visited us as children now bring their own children. But our future is far from certain. We rely on fundraising and what we can earn on site to survive. The Farm is a unique local hub for education and inclusion and we believe that it's really important that we stay free to the public – but we're not free to run. Every single week, the Farm needs:

- £275 to feed the animals
- £400 for hay and straw
- £260 for veterinary care
- £140 in water bills
- £275 to keep the site insured

Our finances are pretty fragile, so an opportunity to collect at an AFC Wimbledon match would be a fantastic boost as well as an opportunity to remind everyone that we're a local charity that needs support. If allowed, we would bring a couple of animals to help us with the collection – we have sheep that walk on leads.

Our charitable objectives as defined in our Articles of Association are:

- Education – we teach visitors, school children, volunteers and work experience placements about animals, nature, conservation and horticulture. We run courses on how to properly look after pets.
- Advancement of citizenship and community development – we hold events at the Farm that bring local people together, we host groups from other local charities like Crisis and Age UK Merton and champion a responsible attitude to animals and the environment.
- Recreation – as well as having gardens, animals and a café for people to enjoy, we also have a Riding School that offers affordable lessons to local, urban children that would not normally be able to access equestrian sport. Teams from our Riding School have placed in national competitions – an amazing achievement for a city farm. We want to be able to continue to subsidise the real cost of these lessons.

We run a range of popular volunteering schemes for local people of all ages, including a supported volunteering scheme for people with additional needs, and we offer work experience to young people from all over London who are studying animal care. In an increasingly divided society, the Farm is a place where young people from all social, cultural and ethnic backgrounds can meet and learn about each other.

Please see our website (www.deencityfarm.co.uk) and social media (@deencityfarm) for more information and images.

Thank you for considering us and I look forward to hearing from you.