



Evaluation for Kentish Town City Farm

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Background

Kentish Town City Farm (KTCF) is the UK's first City Farm. Their ethos is based on inclusiveness and participation of the local community. A team of staff and volunteers host educational programmes and tours for daily visitors from the local community.

In collaboration with the UCL research team, KTCF set out to evaluate which areas of the farm were most visited. This could enable acquisition of future funding that is channelled to areas of the farm with most impact for the visitors.

From the beginning, we acknowledged the importance of designing an evaluation that was sustainable and meets the needs of the community.

Evaluation development

We reviewed previously collected data from young people who attended the farm and helped design the original farm map. This provided insights into current engagement and enjoyment for a key visitor group.

In addition, speaking to staff was an important part of our methods to ensure that the evaluation was led by user-voice. We established that the evaluation had to be engaging and accessible for everyone, specifically for young children.

To build on the young people's feedback and participation in designing the farm map, researchers produced an animated version. This map was placed at the farm exit and using different coloured stickers as indicators, visitors fed back on which part of the farm they enjoyed most and least.

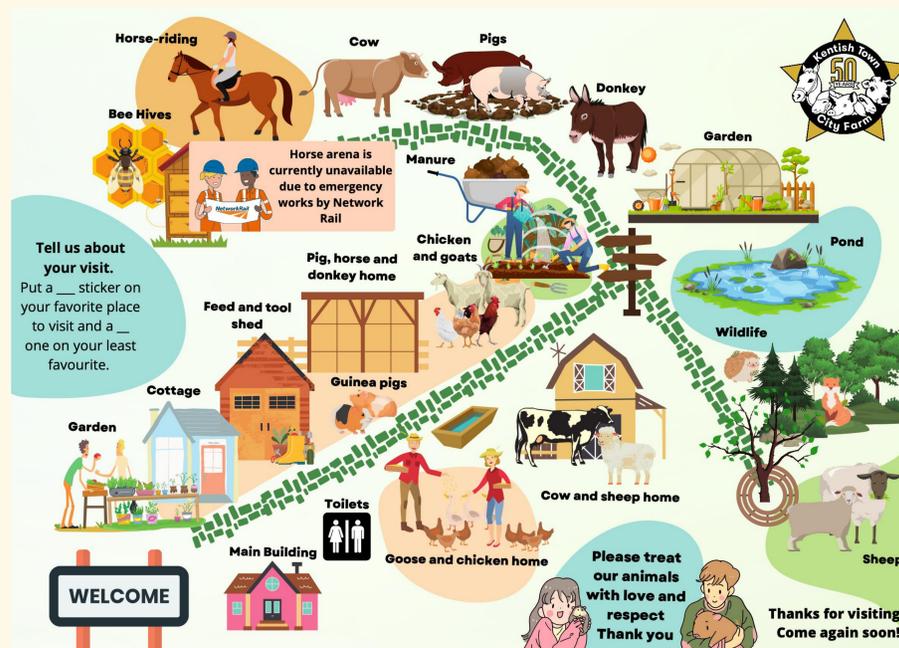
Piloting the map

Our evaluation programme aimed to evaluate the map's feasibility on the farm and how it could be used for future engagement by visitors.

The research was iterative, with the map displayed in various locations and times over a 4-week period. During this time, we made amendments to the size and display of the map to improve engagement.

The map pilot was also influenced by staff availability and weather conditions. It was also piloted either left alone or supported alongside a staff member who encouraged visitors to engage with the map.

Observations from staff suggest the youngest visitors engaged most with the map, who enjoyed using the stickers. However, they may not have followed the instructions, so the accuracy of the stickers (colours and locations) should be interpreted with caution.



Top 3 locations most enjoyed

- 1 Chicken and goats
- 2 Guinea pigs
- 3 Horses (landslide site)

Top 3 locations least enjoyed

- 1 Horses (landslide site)
- 2 Pond
- 3 Donkey

Top 3 locations most engaged with

- 1 Horses (landslide site)
- 2 Chicken and goats
- 3 Cows

Top 3 locations least engaged with

- 1 Main building
- 2 Wildlife
- 3 Garden and cottage

Lessons learnt

The evaluation map was received well by farm visitors and provided valuable insights into how the community engage with different areas of the farm.

Learning points for future evaluations at KTCF:

- Tools designed should be clear and simple, so that data collected is accurate, even for young visitors.
- Evaluations should be robust yet flexible so they can be carried out in changeable circumstances.

Learning points for the Evaluation Exchange:

- Adaptability and clear communication were key to address the challenges of changing milestones and needs of KTCF and researchers alike.

By learning how visitors engage with the farm, we hope KTCF can now develop future tools to show their positive impact on the local community.