

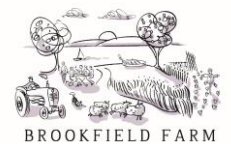
# BROOKFIELD FARM

Rural Development Network February 2017

[www.brookfield.farm](http://www.brookfield.farm)

# Brookfield Farm

- [Background](#)
- Farm
- Beekeeping
- Business
- Future



# Background

Ailbhe Gerrard

MBA Project management

MSc. Environment + Sustainable Development

MSc. Organic Farming



Farm

30 ha

(75 acres)

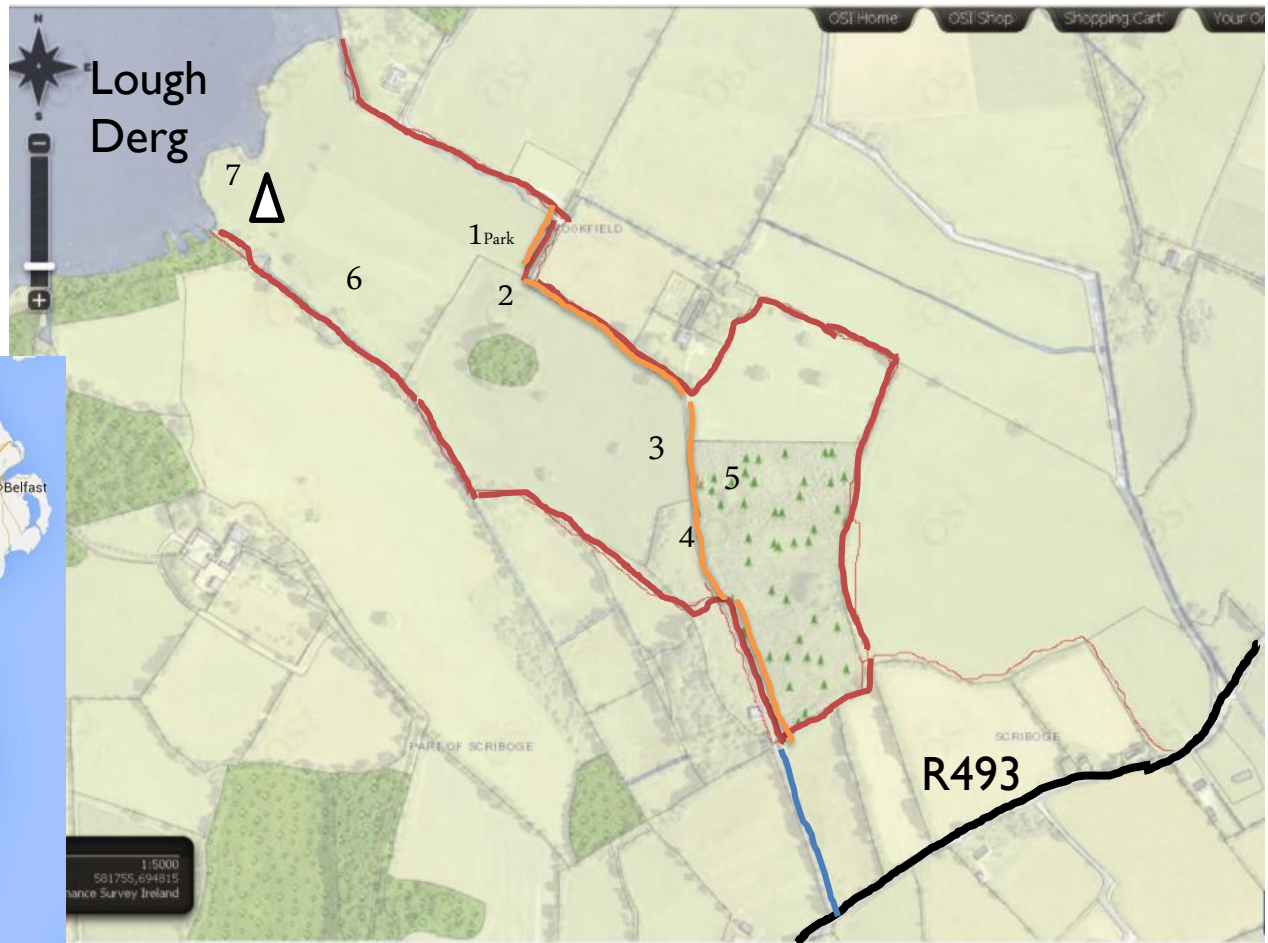
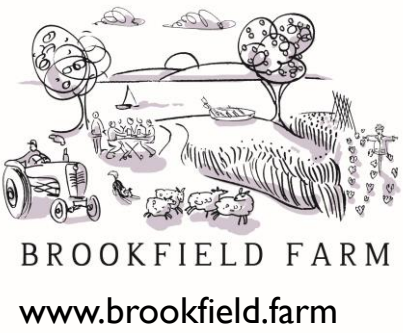


Hiveshare

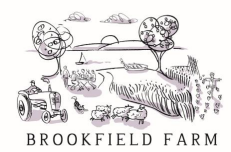
+

Hivegifts





- |  |                             |
|--|-----------------------------|
| 1. Welcome Booth + parking + eco loos    | 5. Forestry                 |
| 2. Bee keeping (3 locations)             | 6. Lamb                     |
| 3. Tillage                               | 7. Refreshments tent, Stall |
| 4. Agri-environment – wild flower meadow |                             |





# Background

## Brookfield Farm

- 30 ha farm (c. 75 acres)
  - 15 ha arable
  - 6 ha broadleaf forestry planted 1996
  - 3 ha native woodland
  - 6 ha grass/ forage
- Farming:
  - arable (barley, wheat, oil seed rape)
  - timber, forestry
  - Lamb sold directly
  - Forage crops: hay, silage

Leads to:

- Beekeeping - Honey + Hiveshare + handmade beeswax candles





## Tillage

Winter Oil seed rape 2013







Spring Barley July 2012



Winter Barley July 2014







## Agri Environment

GLAS scheme: Wild Bird cover + Wild Flower meadow

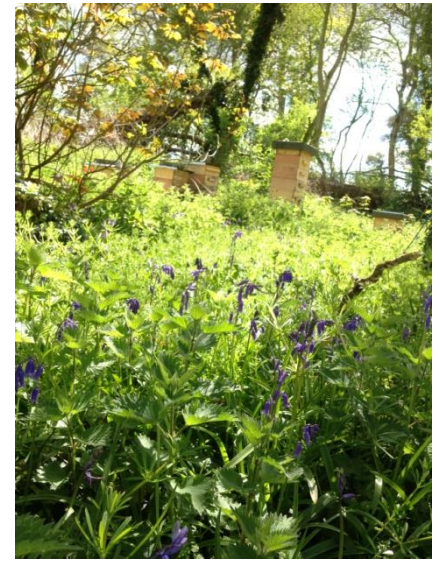
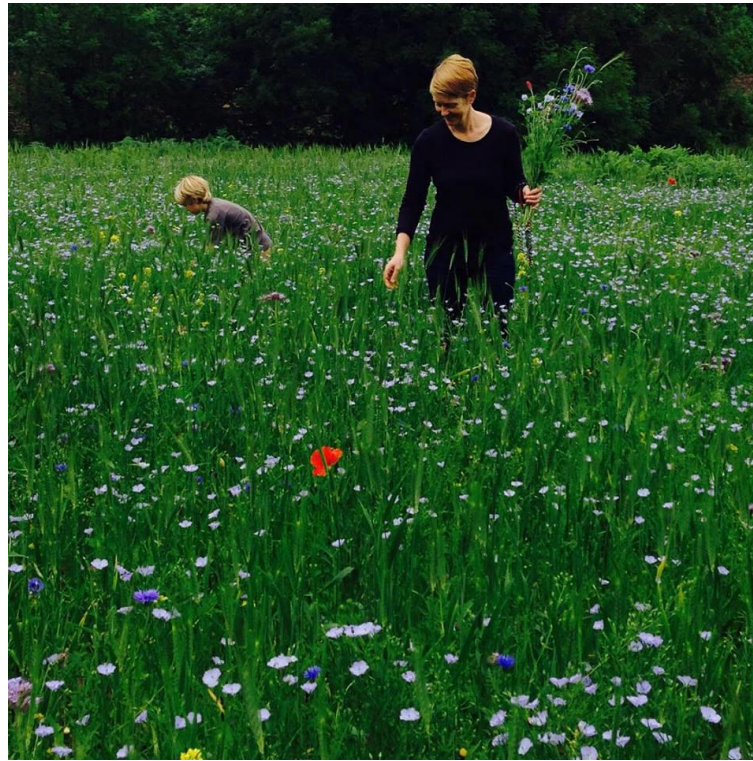
Arable Margin

Whitethorn hedge planting

Forestry







## Wild Bird cover mix

Triticale

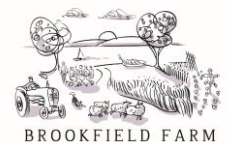
Linseed

Gold of pleasure linseed

Phacelia

Mustard

Crimson clover, red poppies, cornflower



BROOKFIELD FARM





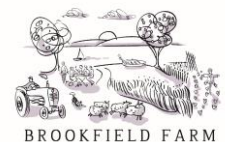
## **Forestry plantation 1997 planted**

Oak (c. 60%); beech (c. 10%); ash (c. 10%); sycamore (c. 17%).

Larch was also planted as a nurse species.

Winter 2011. selective thinning and horse logging.

South west edge of the plantation - shelter belt of cherry and birch. North east edge – sycamore shelter belt.









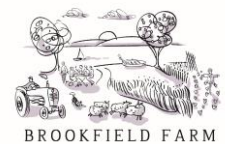


## Lamb

Fattened lambs – in conversion to organic

Grazing clover and organic grass seed, some organic ration when grass is low.

Popular with direct sale customers.





# Beekeeping



## Honey + candles

- 2013 - hives introduced into Roundo wood. Now own hives and mentor beekeepers' surplus
- Products: Honey, wax, pollination services



# Brookfield Farm - business

- Initially direct lamb sales + Hiveshare  
(forward selling honey with newsletters and giftboxes with handmade beeswax candles and lipbalms)
- expanded to include hand dipped + hand poured beeswax candles and hive gifts.

## Sales channels

1. online: [www.brookfield.farm](http://www.brookfield.farm)
2. Fairs and shows Ploughing/RDS etc
3. Retail
  - Kildare Village So Collective
  - Yoga Dublin





# Development journey - highs and lows

## Highs

- ACORNS place!
- Nuffield Agricultural Scholarship
- MSc in Organic Farming 2014
- IFOAM Leadership 2015 + IFOAM Masterclass 2017
- Gurteen College teaching
- Positive publicity
- Sales!

## Lows

- Managing lumpy cashflow
- Feeling underskilled in key areas: retail /production/ packaging/ copyright and employment law
- Previous business collaborator set up in competition
- Sometimes very busy – farm/teaching/business



# How ACORNS has helped

- Like minded women – meeting
- Sharing stories
- Excellent mentoring
- Regular meetings
- Developing business plan
- Knowing there is support
- Next step – ACORNS follow on?







# Aspirations for Brookfield Farm



- High end retail presence throughout Ireland + online
- Quality Retail/visiting/ production space at Brookfield Farm
- Expanded production, greatly increase sales
- Potential to export
- Sustainable farm business
- Employment in rural area



# Brookfield Farm – Thank you!



Ailbhe Gerrard

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