

# *Building a Sustainable Food Future in South Sheffield, Gleadless Valley & Moss Valley*



# Introductions

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**Gareth Roberts**  
Director, Regather &  
Project Lead, Urban  
Agriculture Task Force



**Fran Halsall**  
Garden Services Manager,  
Regather & Research Associate,  
Urban Agriculture Task Force



# A Bit Context...

- ▶ Regather set up in 2005 in South Sheffield
- ▶ Focused on co-op economic development
  - ▶ Increasing household income
  - ▶ Getting best value for the household
  - ▶ Everyone paid same Real Living Wage
- ▶ Resilient, despite change & disruption
  - ▶ Austerity, pandemic, cost of living...
  - ▶ Winning awards, attracting investment...
- ▶ Driven by shared values & vision
  - ▶ Connecting South Sheffield, Gleadless Valley and the Moss Valley



# A Local Food System



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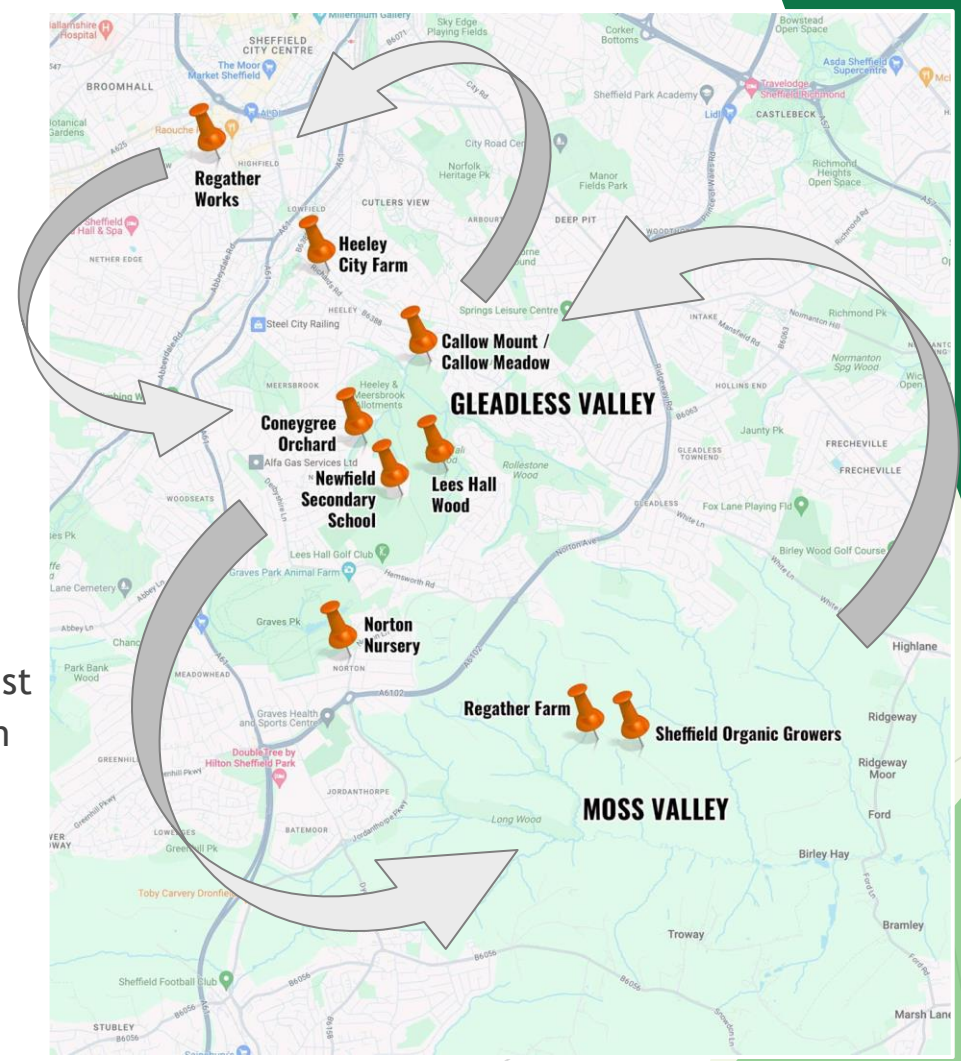
# Locations

- ▶ Regather Works
- ▶ Callow Meadow
- ▶ Coneygree & Lees Hall
- ▶ Newfield School
- ▶ Norton Nursery
- ▶ Regather Farm

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## Project Partners

- ▶ Gleadless Valley Wildlife Trust
- ▶ Gleadless Valley Regen Team
- ▶ Studio Polpo
- ▶ Sheffield Tree Care



# Callow Meadow Garages: Feasibility Study



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- ▶ community participation
- ▶ re-open meeting room
- ▶ site assessment
- ▶ explore potential uses
- ▶ South LAC £4k
- ▶ Regather ~ £4k
- ▶ working with Studio Polpo

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# Coneygree Wood: New Community Orchard Planting



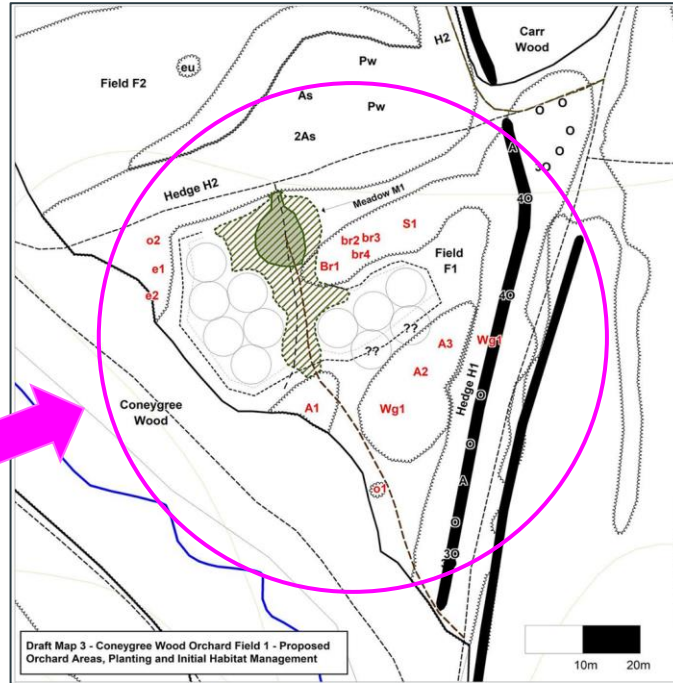
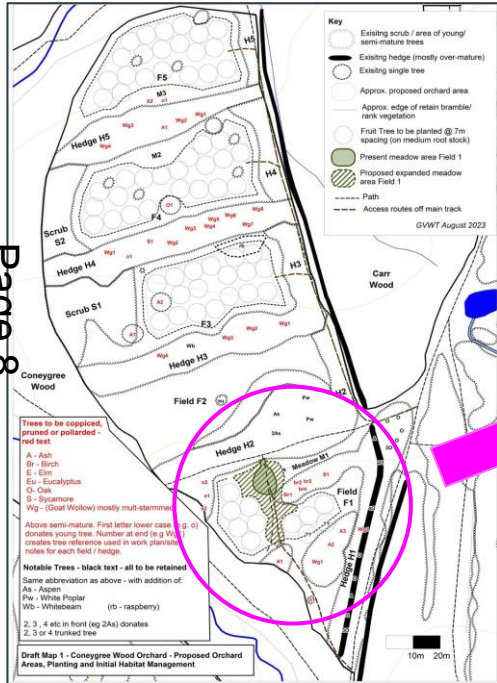
Working with the Gleadless Valley Wildlife Trust





# Coneygree Wood: New Community Orchard Planting

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- ▶ approx 70 new trees
- ▶ over 2-3 years
- ▶ no fence / enclosure
- ▶ community planting
- ▶ community harvest
- ▶ juice production
- ▶ fruit redistribution

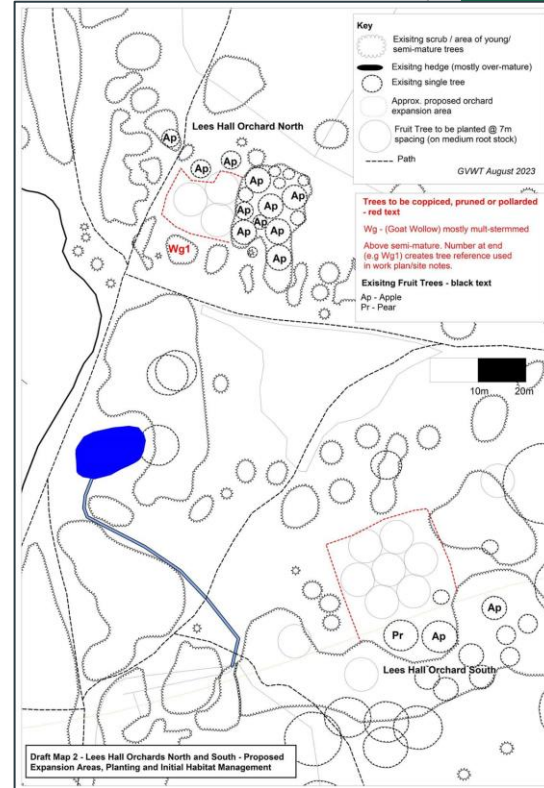


# Lees Hall: Historic Orchard Restoration



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Working with the Gleadless Valley Wildlife Trust



# Newfield School - Proposed Orchard Nursery



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- ▶ opportunity to involve school community
- ▶ develop outdoor classroom facility
- ▶ climate and nature learning opportunities



# Cat Lane: Active Travel & Green Space Access



- ▶ opportunity to connect people & place
- ▶ increase use for school children



# Norton Nursery, Graves Park

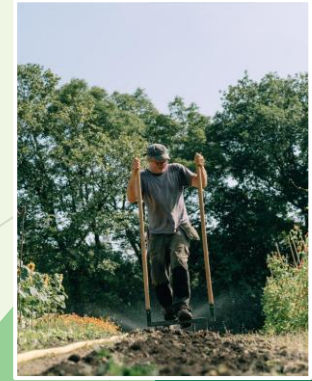
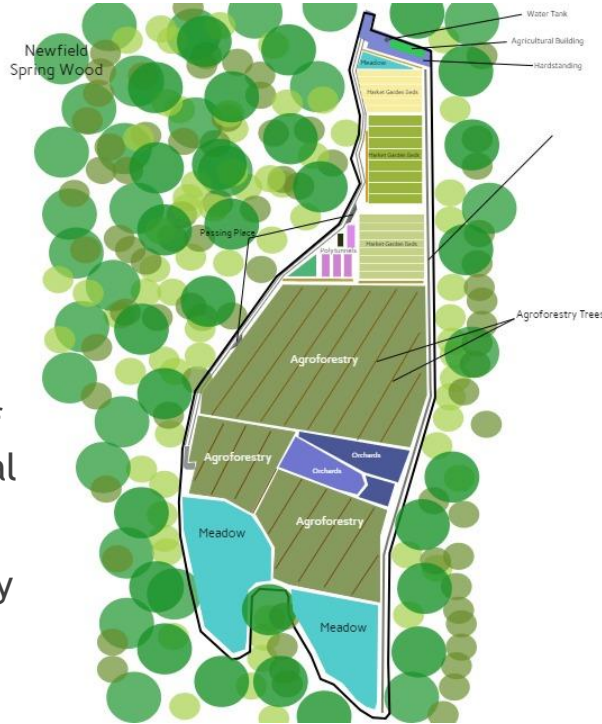
- ▶ Currently used for mower storage
- ▶ Ideal for large scale plant propagation
- ▶ ‘Plug-plants’ - significantly increase likelihood of successful plant
- ▶ Food and nature-friendly plants
- ▶ Potential site for ‘in vessel’ compost production, to be used on site
- ▶ Potential for horticultural employment & training opportunities



# Regather Farm

- ▶ 15 acre peri-urban market garden / agroforestry development.
- ▶ Rehabilitating land damaged by 20th century industrial agriculture.
- ▶ Situated within a cluster of other organic growers (total 34 acres).
- ▶ Supplies vegetables directly in Regather's box scheme.

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# The Urban Agriculture Task Force



## Low carbon food infrastructure in Sheffield

March 2021

Foreword courtesy of the directors of the Institute for Sustainable Food at University of Sheffield

Introduction provided by Gareth Roberts of the ShefFood Partnership

Produced by Fran Halsall for the ShefFood Partnership

## The Urban Agriculture Task Force

The Urban Agriculture Task Force (UATF) has been created to interrogate the potential for a food system in Sheffield that is both socially just and environmentally sustainable. This will be achieved through a focus on urban and peri-urban agroecological production, community capacity-building, and education.

### Our approach

The UATF has adopted a scaled approach to food system transformation which recognises the need to act within nested governance structures, starting at the ward level and expanding outwards. We have decided to focus our research initially on the South Sheffield Local Area, with the aim of developing a methodology that could be replicated across the wider region.



Image 1: The Green Wedge and key sites

### The Green Wedge

Our work within South Sheffield is focused around the development of a 'Green Wedge' radiating out from the centre of the city. This proposed geographic segment unites an array of existing and proposed peri-urban primary production and processing sites with community organisations and educational institutions, to create a vision of a cohesive and sustainable local food system.

## Theme 2 Project 2.3



Images 2, 3, and 4: Peri-urban agriculture in action on the Regather Farm



Image 5: Selected UN SDGs related to Project 2.3

### Reports and publications

Published in March 2021, the Low Carbon Food Infrastructure in Sheffield report took a detailed overview of the current urban food system, and laid out plans for the future development of a city-wide, agro-ecological, values-based model. In early 2022, this report led to the development of a Local Food Systems Policy Accelerator Project which saw Regather partner with the UoS to engage 8 student researchers around the topic of sustainable food system policy and partnership. This project facilitated over 480 hours of research and led to the creation of 6 reports. These reports have been used to inform the work of the UATF and as the basis for the development of a series of ShefFood working groups.



Image 6: QR report cover

### Connections and partnerships

The UATF is working closely with a number of public and private sector partners across the city to deliver different aspects of our projects. Some of our current partners include:

- The University of Sheffield
- Sheffield Hallam University
- Sheffield City Council
- Heeley City Farm
- School Food Matters
- ShefFood - Sheffield's Food Partnership
- Gleadless Valley Regeneration Team
- Gleadless Valley Wildlife Trust

### Gleadless Valley Food Hub and Orchard

The UATF and Regather are collaborating with a local architect, Studio Polpo, to carry out a feasibility assessment for the development of a Food Hub in Gleadless Valley. The proposed project will create a new facility in the heart of the community, improving food infrastructure, generating jobs for local people, boosting the economy and supporting agroecological farming in Sheffield.

We are working with Gleadless Valley Wildlife Trust to create a new community orchard near to the proposed food hub. Alongside producing fruit, the orchard will be designed to increase biodiversity, improve air quality and sequester carbon. It will also provide a site for educational visits and community engagement activities. Fruit will be distributed to residents and local projects.

### Supporting Food Growing in Schools Survey

The survey represents another strand of the UATF work focused around skills, training, and public engagement. We have developed a series of questions to capture food growing activity in primary and secondary education institutions in Sheffield, with 30 responses to date. These responses will shape our future work.

What support does your school need access to?

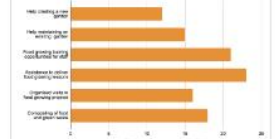


Figure 1: Example of an output from the Schools Survey

### Meet the team



Gareth Roberts  
Alice Farmery  
Fran Halsall

### Next steps

We will advance Project 2.3 by continuing to generate location-specific knowledge and build relationships within the community and with our partner organisations. Future priorities include:

- Exploring the decarbonisation of last-mile delivery via the use of electric vehicles
- Digital mapping of urban food landscapes
- Advancing our work within schools
- Developing a new Regional Food Strategy
- Building on the Natural Capital Assessment
- Supporting delivery of Net Zero in the Sheffield region





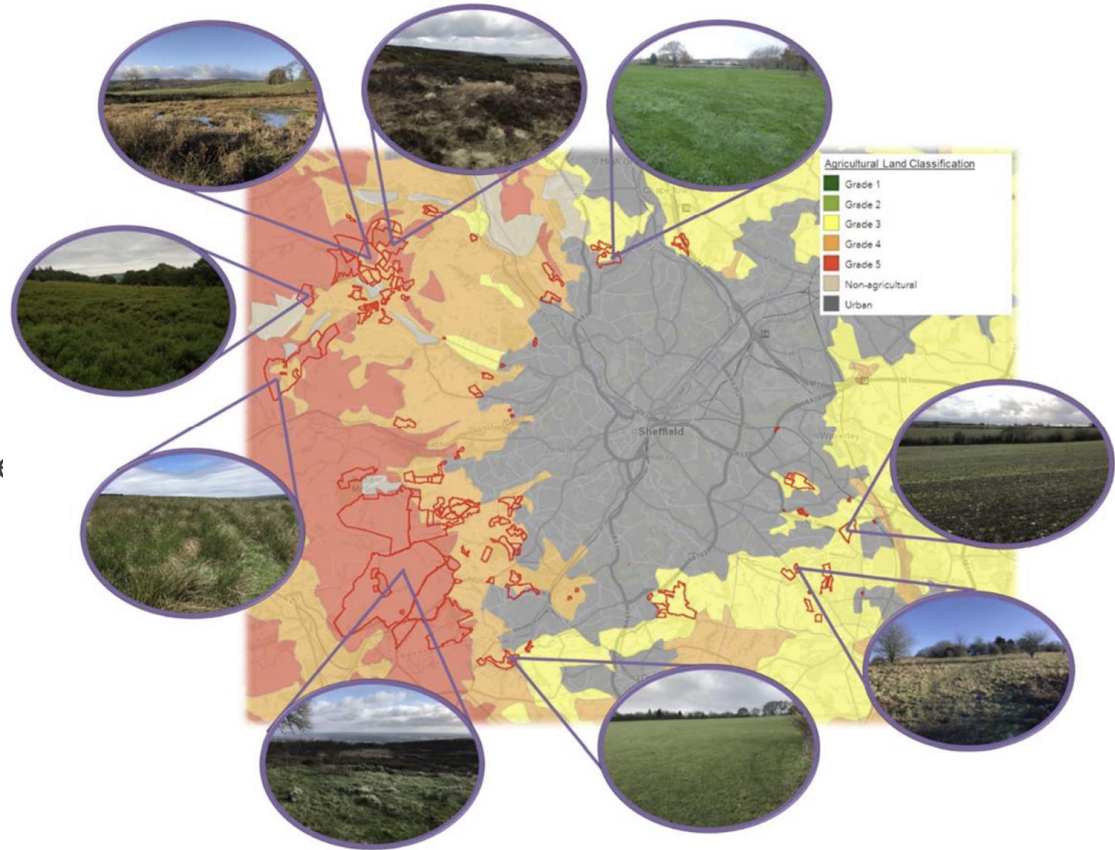
# Growing the local food system

## SCC Rural Estate Management Plan

- ▶ Grade 3 land (yellow):  
use for Regenerative Horticulture!

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- ▶ Environmental Land Management Schemes (ELMS)
  - ▶ Sustainable Farming Incentive
  - ▶ Local Nature Recovery
  - ▶ Landscape Recovery
- ▶ Local Nature Recovery Strategy



# Growing the local food system

## SCC Rural Estate Management Plan

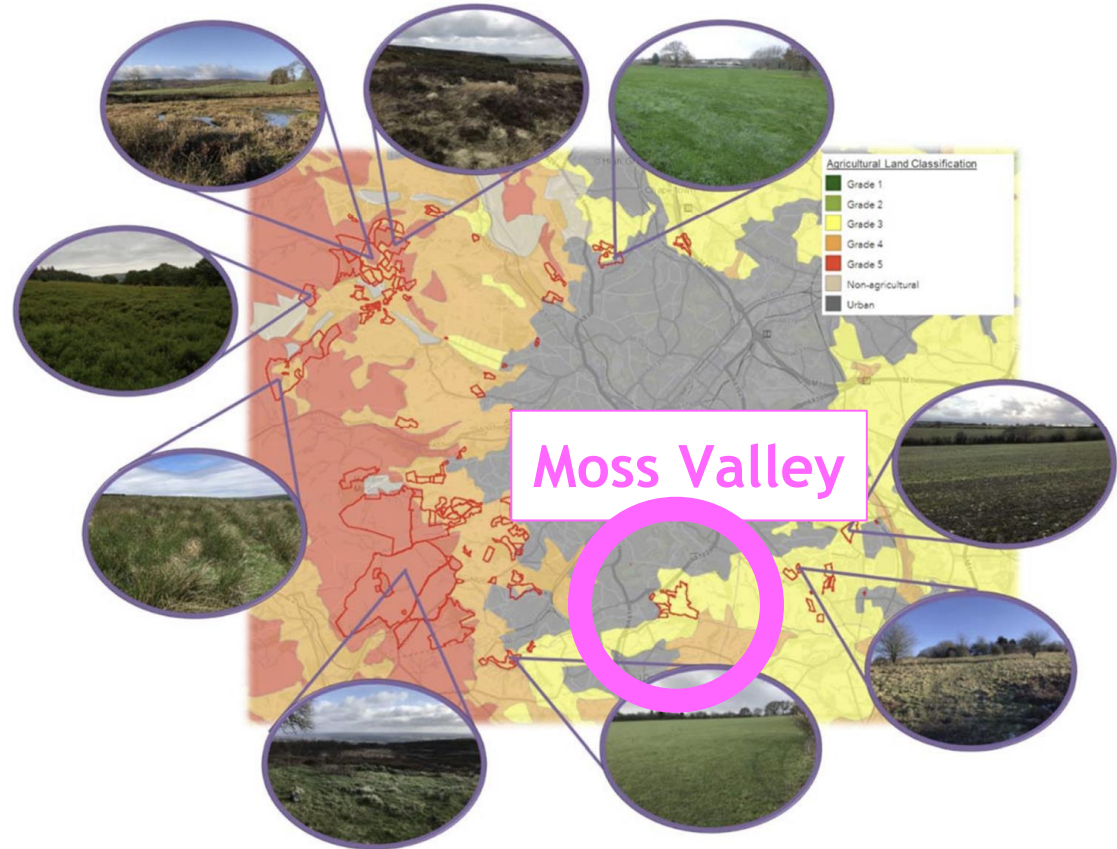
### ► Priorities:

- Carbon capture / Net Zero
- Biodiversity Net Gain
- Flood Mitigation

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*"The Council will work with local communities and partners to identify spaces where food production and provision can be accommodated"*

Fairer, Healthier, Greener -  
A Food Strategy for Sheffield (2022)

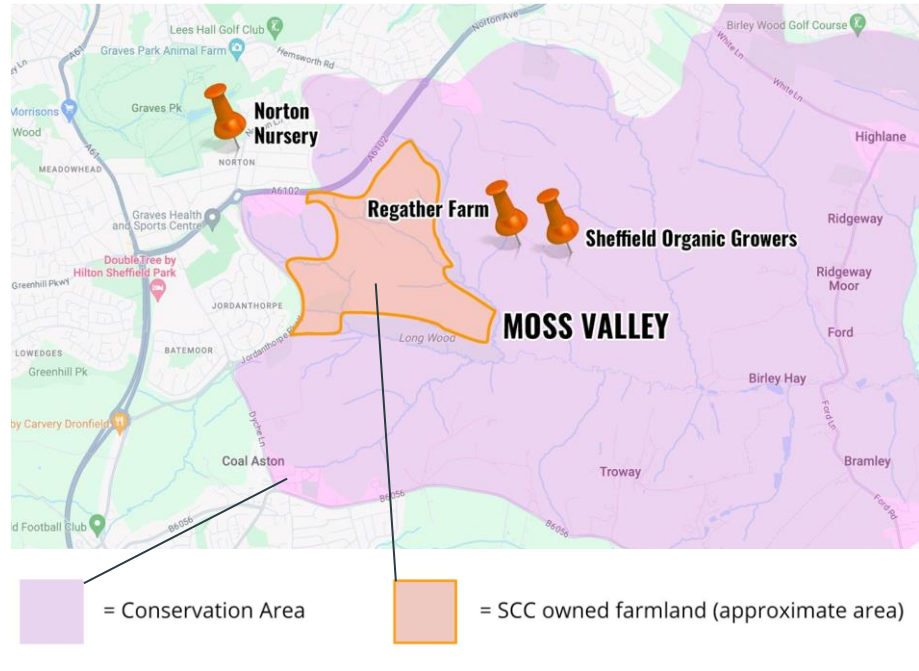


# Growing the local food system

## The Moss Valley

- ▶ SCC: 192 acres of land
- ▶ Local food
- ▶ Local jobs
- ▶ Local nature recovery
- ▶ Local economic resilience
- ▶ Farm Cluster Development

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