



Norfolk and Suffolk Health and Care Awards 2026

Partnership with People and Communities Award

Rural Communities Cancer Project

The Farming Community Network and Macmillan Cancer Support

The Farming Community Network's (FCN) UK-wide Rural Communities Cancer Project, developed in partnership with Macmillan Cancer Support, is a pioneering initiative designed to improve cancer awareness, early detection and access to support among farming, rural and migrant worker communities. These groups often face significant barriers, including isolation, stigma, demanding work patterns and limited local services. The project addresses these challenges through tailored, community-focused interventions.

Key initiatives include the *#NipItInTheBud* campaign, which promotes early symptom recognition and encourages help-seeking behaviour, and on-the-ground outreach at agricultural shows, marts and rural events, bringing information directly to people in familiar settings. The project also builds referral pathways between rural networks and cancer services, ensuring individuals receive supportive, coordinated care.

In the South East, the programme is led by Angharad, whose professional and personal experience brings authenticity and empathy to the work. With input from individuals with lived experience, the project is grounded in real community needs. Volunteer networks play a vital role, delivering awareness activities and fostering open conversations about cancer, including innovative events such as "Yarn in a Barn."

The impact has been significant, with over 60 detailed insights gathered to inform service improvement and increased engagement across diverse rural audiences. Feedback shows a shift in attitudes, with more individuals feeling empowered to seek medical advice. The project has also created a lasting resource, *Farming with Cancer*, offering practical, relatable guidance.

By embedding support within trusted rural networks, FCN has created a sustainable, scalable model that reduces inequalities and improves cancer outcomes in underserved communities.