



Feed Leeds Minutes: August 15th 2019 – Meanwood Valley Urban Farm

Present: **Tom Bliss** (Chair and minutes), **Paul Ackroyd** (former Manager LCC The Arium), **Adam Ogilvie** (MVUF Chief Exec), **Cllr Ann Forsaith** (Green Party), **Sue Ottley-Hughes** (Friends of Stank Hall Barn), **Gaymering Bennett** and **Linda Bishop** (Our Future Leeds), **Sarah-Jane Mason** (RHS and Leeds Rotters), **Dorota** and **Tomaz Hajdukiewicz** (Growing Better)

Apologies: **Sonja Woodcock** (Leeds Food Partnership etc), **Paul Magnall** (Rainbow Junction / Leeds Rotters), **Rosie Atkins** (Leeds Rotters, LESSN and Kirkstall Valley Farm), **Siobhan Jennings** (née O'Mahony, LCC Healthy Schools), **Joe Foster** (Leeds Allotments Federation).

Our Future Leeds

This is the group which grew out of XR with the purpose of persuading LCC to declare a climate emergency, who now have a base at Meanwood Valley Urban Farm. Following on from that success, Linda and Gay are currently exploring a number of issues and groups, to see where their energy might best be next directed. Naturally, FL would be delighted to have more core team members, especially those with a focus on the climate emergency.

Green Party

Ann is the newly elected member for Farnley and Wortley. She has a background in education and is on the Children and Families panel as well as the Transport and Biodiversity groups. Driving to and parking around schools is a focus area, as is teaching children to grow, harvest and cook food because she is a keen grower herself. Assuming she's not on holiday, Ann aims to attend the LESSN event in October, and we hope future activity too.

LESSN: Growing Food and Gardening through the Curriculum.

We are running an additional autumn event in the morning of the 18th of October around the Pumpkin Rescue campaign (see last issue) - and it's a good one!

*"What's scarier than witches, ghosts and ghouls at Halloween?
How about the **18,000 tonnes of edible pumpkin that ends up in the bin each year?**
That's the same weight as 1,500 double decker buses!"*



"The Health and Wellbeing Service, together with Feed Leeds, LESSN and Meanwood Valley Urban Farm are delighted to present this exciting and newsworthy event. Bringing together two imperative topics, climate change and food waste, this event will help to show schools how you can engage your pupils with making a difference to our planet and all through the medium of pumpkins! Delegates will learn about the pumpkin rescue campaign, how to carve and utilise almost every last bit of a delicious pumpkin to create nutritious recipes.

The event will also include clear guidance and advice for how to reduce food waste throughout school and effect waste management systems. There will be an interactive workshop on composting for schools, to give school staff a hands on experience of how and what to compost.

Finally, all this will support schools to deliver key priorities and actions to address climate change and learn about how to make your school a more sustainable and environmentally friendly place to learn and grow."



Schools need to pay to attend, but we do find this increases numbers as Heads see the event as having more value, and so permit or encourage attendance. Attendees will be invited to stay on for the Leeds Rotters event in the afternoon (and sample the excellent farm café - above)!

Contact Siobhan.O'Mahony@leeds.gov.uk to book a place.

Leeds Rotters

We are holding a second Wheelie Workshop in the afternoon of the 18th of October.

Mark Warner has stepped back from his informal role as group motivator (for an excellent reason - he's working flat out to take Plate 2 Plate Compost full time), so the group convened on the 16th to discuss best ways to maintain momentum.

Meanwood Valley Urban Farm

We are especially pleased to have Adam (the creator of Feed Leeds) more involved. Also, Paul Ackroyd has now become a trustee of the farm, and is now helping Adam, Luke and Ben (Paul specifically asked to have minuted his highest praise for their work and progress to date) to take the horticultural agenda at the farm forward, and we can all see lots of very positive opportunities for both FL and FL members in collaboration with the farm.

Growing Better

It was especially great to have good news from [GB](#). FL had a small hand in the creation of this innovative project, when Rob Moores asked us for help in finding land to set up a horticulture CIC in

support of people with mental health challenges. Through us he met Paul Ackroyd, and so the first phase of the project flourished at Redhall Nurseries.

When that site closed, FL members supported the move to hydroponics, first at the Sharehouse in Pudsey and then at Unity in Sheepscar, and the growing of high value microgreens and herbs. Phase three involved day-to-day management being handed to Dorota (assisted by Tomasz) as Rob stepped back to a more advisory role, first at Unity and then returning to the shipping container, which FL helped to crowd-fund, at the West Leeds Activity Centre, which is also home of Plate 2 Plate Compost and the Orchard Project tree nursery. Rob and other FL members had already laid out a new community farm/allotment here.



At the meeting, Dorota reported exciting plans for phase four, which involves moving the container - which now boasts state-of-the-art electronics being trialed by a local specialist company - to a better site close to the allotment, and the addition of a second shipping container (possibly involving innovative new crops), plus, hopefully, a third shed for tool storage, café and education activity. This will involve laying on power and water, and ideally a wheelchair-friendly path from the main facility. There is a strong focus on a circular economy ethos, with minimal use of water, and waste being recycled into growing. GB are still working with Café Leep in Sheepscar, and will be taking hydroponics into schools with the Ahead Partnership next year.

The team welcome volunteers to assist with allotment growing, and are keen to build up the outdoor volunteer group to relaunch on the allotment, which has been covered with weed suppressant, and will be ready for cultivation soon. Sessions are on Thursdays and Sundays 10-2. We hope the October Feed Leeds meeting will be at WLAC and will include a visit to GB.

Friends of Stank Hall Barn

It seems that [Stank Hall Barn](#) might have lost its crown as Leeds' oldest building! When Sue was surveying the dusty depths of [Calverley Old Hall](#) (which is being twinned with Stank Hall) she discovered Norman features which would predate anything in South Beeston.

The twinning offers SHB a potential life-line and comes at an opportune time when there's even a slim hope that the proposed sale of the building by LCC may not in fact be proceeding.

In any event, the introduction of relatively well-heeled Calverley into a project focused on the provision of fresh veg and growing skills to the food poor (along with major expertise in community activity, mediaeval food, archeology and building conservation) is excellent news.



Calverley Old Hall

New Chapeltown Growing Project

Marie-Pierre, Paul and Tom are advising a chap aiming to start up a street-side plot in Chapeltown, which came to us via Joe and the Leeds Allotments Federation. We've offered him co-management support, and suggested that he follows other FL members to become an In Bloom project, under the protection of Richard Gill at Parks.

RHS

Lots of great work going on as usual:

RHS Community Gardening Grass Roots magazine summer edition available now <https://www.rhs.org.uk/get-involved/community-gardening/grass-roots>

Online resources for groups <https://www.rhs.org.uk/get-involved/community-gardening/resources>

The Big Soup Share - Monday 7 October and Sunday 13 October 2019 The Big Soup Share is a chance to celebrate the work you do in your garden by harvesting your crops, whizzing them up into a delicious soup and sharing it out with others.



Apply for a resource pack (or download resources) - Sarah Jane is aiming to push this hard. from <https://schoolgardening.rhs.org.uk/Competitions/Big-Soup-Share>

Community Free Day at RHS Garden Harlow Carr – Tuesday 1st October 2019 A chance to visit the gardens for free.

Back to Nature Cards designed by HRH Duchess of Cambridge and RHS Simple kids activities to consider <https://www.rhs.org.uk/shows-events/rhs-chelsea-flower-show/news/2019/duchess-designs-rhs-garden>

Grow Wild (Kew Gardens)

Ben is putting together materials for the LESSN event, and running a youth event himself on Thursday 3rd Oct, for which he'd be glad of a Feed Leeds presence. Location and details tba.

Tom can't go - anyone else able to?

The next round of seed packets is now live and online here: <https://www.growwilduk.com/sign-grow-wildflowers-us-autumn>

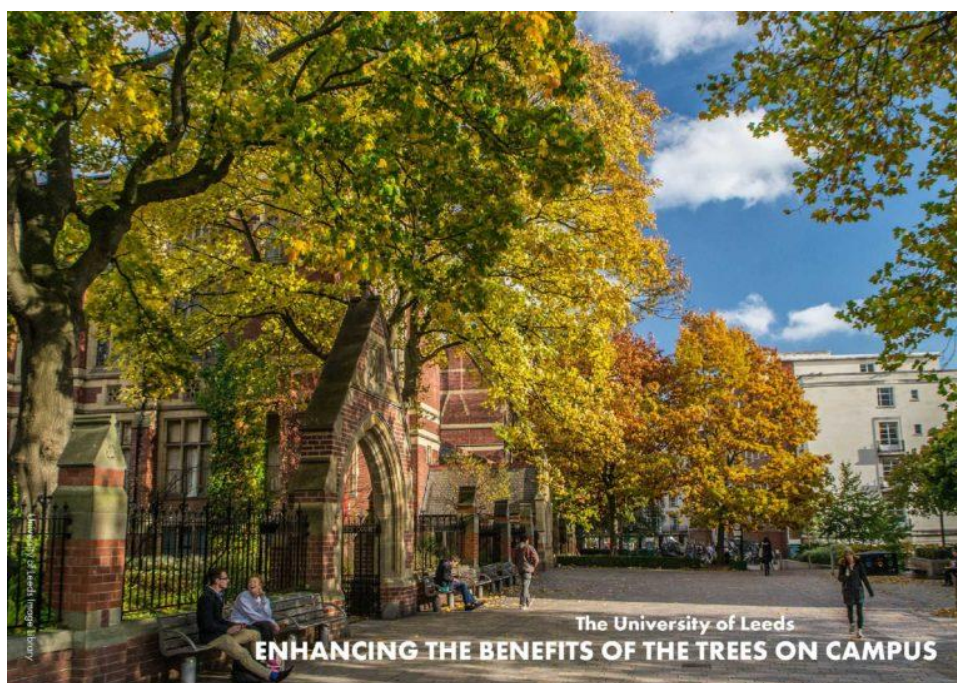
Organic Matters

Rosie shared a link to the first [Organic Growers Horticulture Conference](#) in Bristol on October 22nd, Not local, but a great place for information and support if you can get there.

Climate Matters

The Scenario Planning Workshop (triggered by Feed Leeds) is taking place on either the 4th or the 11th of Nov, either at the Civic or Nexus. Space is going to be a bit limited, but we do want to have representation from community groups / food poverty etc. Contact Sonja if keen to be involved.

Tom is also liaising between this group and Sustainable Food Cities in the development of a briefing document on the evidence for action on the climate and nature emergency and food's role within it.



And Tom's team at UoL, [UBoC](#), have published their report on the values attached to urban trees, based on a three-summer-long survey of every tree on the campus, and a LOT of data crunching. At the moment, values are only based on carbon capture, carbon storage, water retention, air pollution mitigation, nearby building performance, and amenity. Tom is working towards tools that also measure biodiversity, soil carbon, mental health benefits and, crucially, crops including food, but this is still some way off. <https://leaf.leeds.ac.uk/i-tree-leeds-putting-a-value-on-the-citys-trees/>

Next Meeting:

We're back at Further North for Potting Shed Drinks at 8pm on 19th Sept.

The next GM will be on Monday 23rd Sept, 9.30 am, again at Meanwood Valley Urban Farm.



And yes, they're still doing the edible beds at the Civic :-)