



## **AGM + SPROUTS! Planning Workshop, 20th Jan, Committee Room 1, Civic Hall.**

### **Attending:**

**Adam Ogilvie** (MVUF), **Joe Foster** (LAF), **Paul Ackroyd** (MVAf), **Cllr Ann Forsaith** (Green Party), **Martin Hemingway**, **Paul Magnall** (Leeds Rotters, Rainbow Junction), **Sue Ottley-Hughes** (FOSH), **Becky Mears** (Season Well, IE Aireborough), **Ama Chayney** (Grow to School), **Robbie Goodfellow**, **Jim Hurst** and **Dan Palmer** (Eat Your Greens), **Lucy Wheeler** (TCV), **Sarah-Jane Mason** (RHS), **Hillary Dodson** (Northern Fruit Group), **Ronnie Senior** (Leeds Urban Harvest), **Sonja Woodcock** (LFP and Treasurer), **Tom Bliss** (Chair and minutes).

### **Apologies:**

**Rosie Atkins** (Leeds Rotters, Kirkstall Valley Farm), **Luke Justice** (MVUF et al), **Camille Thomas**, **Emma Goodway** and **Jelenda Zindovic** (Space 2), **Alice Hefford**, **Emma Strachan** (LCC Heath and LFP), **Pete Tatham** (Hyde Park Source), **Andy Goldring** (LPN), **John Preston** (TCV), **Les Firkbank** (UOL), **Penny Pinn** (Leeds Rotters), **Helen Butt** (Leeds Rotters).



### **AGM Housekeeping**

Tom stood down as Chair. Then stood up again because no-one else wanted to sit in it. (The chair, that is - in spite of it being a rather nice carved one, with curved arms - as you can see). So, Tom stood as Acting Chair instead, and Martin Hemingway stood as Vice Chair or, as he prefers, Shadow Chair (thanks Martin, this really is appreciated). And then Tom also stood down as Acting Secretary and stood instead as Actual Secretary, to cheers (not chairs) because we haven't had a sitting one of those for years. And finally, everyone else stood (while sitting down), to stay in the same seats they were standing in before all this standing up / sitting down stuff started. Then we all voted (sitting down, but with our hands kind of standing up); Unanimously. So now we can let things stand for another year (if we can stand any more of this, err, situation - which I'm reasonably sure I can't)!

Sonja, as Treasurer, then provided an update on the finances from the previous year (2018), when we had no money at all, so that didn't take long. But she did explain that, at the moment, we do have a little in the account on account of the current co-partnership agreement with Leeds Rotters (which is about compost, not currents) on whose behalf we currently hold some cash (see previous minutes).

## Summary

Chair / co-chair	<b>Vacant</b> (volunteer needed)
Vice chair / co-chair	Martin Hemingway
Treasurer	Sonja Woodcock
Secretary	Tom Bliss (also Comms and Acting chair)

## SPROUTS! Planning Workshop

**Summary:** No final decision was taken, but the consensus was that a workshop-based event with stalls at Kirkgate Market would probably be our first choice, assuming it was available / affordable, and we were confident of a big walk-up. A festival-type event in one of the green venues also had merit, but there were concerns that this might be preaching to the choir, and/or reach fewer people. A steering group is being formed to work through the issues and make a recommendation, which will be actioned at the first opportunity as time is fairly tight before, ideally, April.

## Action points

**Adam:** Source a current contact for Kirkgate Market, and pass to Tom (to find out about costs etc).

**Tom:** Send an email to the steering group (see below) to pin down a date, time and venue for a first group meeting. **If anyone else would like to join the group, please stood up now.**

The steering group will aim to have met at least once before

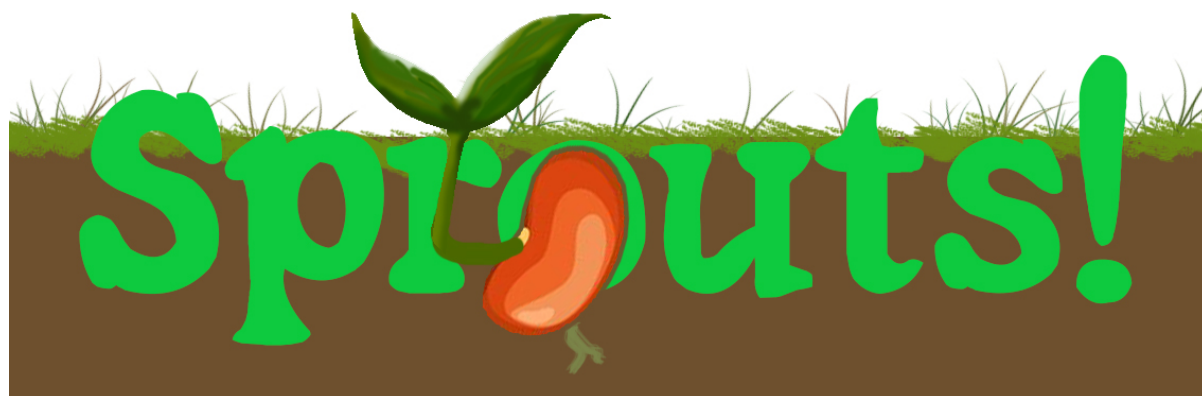
**The next Feed Leeds GM on Tuesday 25th of Feb at 10 am Eat Your Greens.** 42 New York Street, LS2 7DY, Leeds. 0113 244 6896 <https://www.eatyourgreensleeds.co.uk/>  
NB: 1) Notice the date. 2) Bring things to go in pancakes!

**Potting Shed Drinks on 20th of Feb, as usual.**

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## Discussion

The workshop started with a general and lively discussion about the proposed SPROUTS! event. (Thanks to Paul M for noticing that the title is a rather weedy pun. But one with a pleasantly bitter aftertaste, I'd like to think). Everyone seemed to like the name anyway, and the pun would work better if we made the logo something like this:



Anyway. Tom asked Sue to outline again her original suggestion, which is strongly focused on people, especially in South Leeds, suffering food poverty who lack skills, knowledge and motivation around growing, preparing and cooking food, thus condemning them to further privation than that

already delivered by poverty and other injustices. (It was noted that recent immigrants tend to have more skills and motivation in these areas, though they are likely to lack land for growing, if not cash for food).

The debate then opened up, with contributions from all present, and a number of different approaches emerged - all with a general aim of improving public awareness around food growing, sourcing locally and seasonality, preserving, cooking etc. (So perhaps we can say we agreed on Why, and largely When and How, but had varying ideas on Who, and therefore on What and Where).

So we focused on our target audience, and again a number of views emerged. One early clarification was that while we are always keen to target schools as having both immediate needs (hungry kids) and long term needs (obesity, health, food education etc.) as well as providing potential outreach into local communities, because of resource limitations SPROUTS! was probably not going to be about schools - though kids would be very welcome, and definitely should be catered for.



It was also discussed whether this should be a single event or a series. Again, while we know we do need to run activities like this often, the Acting Chair (remember him?) was keen to keep a strong focus on delivering the most impact for the least effort and resources - past experience having taught us that it's better for Feed Leeds (being, as we are, populated by people with a primary loyalty to a member group rather than to the network, and having at the moment no money apart from that allocated to Leeds Rotters), to do something more modest really well, than to aim high but then struggle to deliver because everyone is too busy with equally important things in their own patches.

So it was generally agreed that we should aim for a bigish event in Spring, ideally in April after the next LAF Learning Day on 7th March (Tom will be doing a talk about Feed Leeds at this - supporters welcome), with a clear plan to also do something in the autumn at harvest time, either as another stand-alone Feed Leeds event, or in cahoots with member group events, such as TCV Skelton Grange open days, apple days etc.

A broad range of ideas were floated, including stalls for member organisations (the idea of talks/debates did not raise much enthusiasm, but could perhaps take place in a side room for anyone who enjoys that kind of thing), food prep and cookery demonstrations (e.g. herb teas like Becky did last time we visited Kirkgate), a pop-up allotment (LAF have just the very thing), seed planting and plant - err - planting, veg tasting (sprouts?), seed and plant sharing and/or sales, another wheelie workshop, mini composting kit and skills, compost sales (if people have extra - Mark?), general networking and brainstorming, food-themed fun and games, bike-powered sound systems (Pete?), and perhaps even veg buskers

like this [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T\\_lo8AKPedY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T_lo8AKPedY)

or even this <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xM1EjIDLMLY?>



There will be many more fantastic ideas that can be triaged once we've narrowed down the shape, scope, style and location and of the event.

It was when we started to consider possible venues that matters really came into focus. There seemed to be broadly two axes to the debate.

One axis was between very different types of venue:

A) was a preference for a city centre venue, with Kirkgate Market in pole position (other suggestions included Bridge St Centre, White Rose Centre, Holbeck WMC, Royal Armouries and even Cookridge St Pop-Up Park). The advantages here would be passing traffic, including especially those most in need, a range of rooms, no worries about weather (apart from Cookridge St - which some felt was actually too far away from where the core audience would be). This would still be a newsworthy destination event in a location with easy access from the whole city.

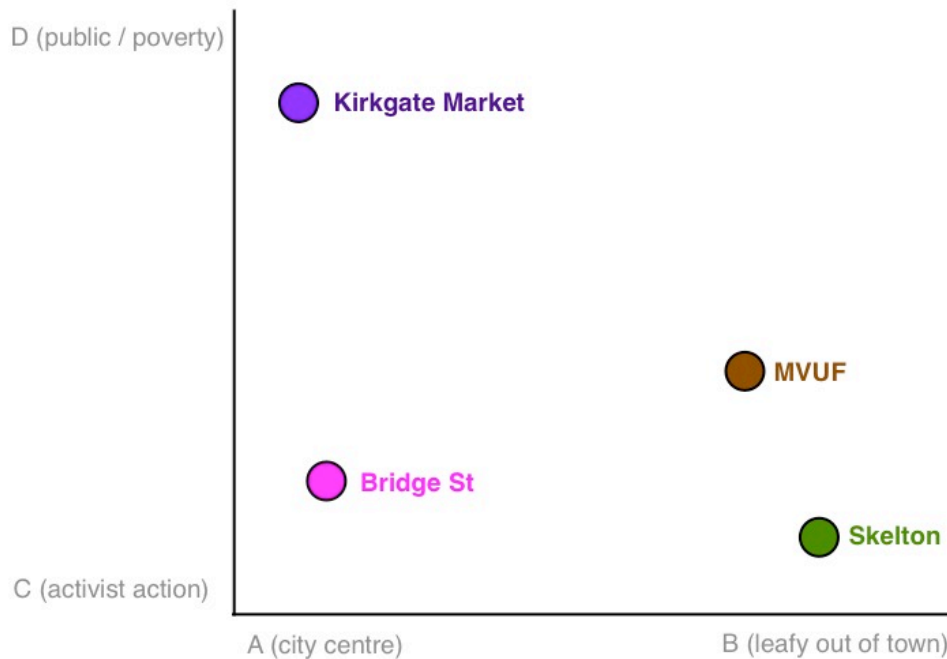
B) was a preference for a leafy out of town venue, such as Skelton Grange or MVUF, which are attractions in their own right and have the advantage of food growing, composting etc on site, with plenty of space in terms of land, if more limitations in terms of rooms. A festival style event here would largely attract people already into greenery etc. even if not fully up-to-snuff on food growing, but perhaps not so many people in real food poverty, and thus most in need.

The other axis was between two approaches to the main focus of the day:

C) was closer to the Leeds Summat philosophy, with a primary purpose of bringing food activists from across the network together (the public would still be welcome, especially non-food activists keen to know more about growing, and wanting to connect their own projects with Feed Leeds member groups), sharing and mapping best practice, outreach, knowledge, skills, dates, activities etc, and so turbocharge mutual effectiveness across the network, and thus at various events through the summer, including any we decide to create in the autumn.

D) was firmly focused on delivering the maximum impact possible to and on behalf of those with the most need - while also offering as much of the above as possible as was practicable.

Thinking about this, we could perhaps plot the different options on a graph, with the X axis being A > B and the Y axis being C > D. An event at the market with a strong focus on people in major food poverty would appear top left, and an activist-focused event at Skelton Grange bottom right.



Deciding the venue helps to define what should then be prioritised. There should be room for a bit of everything, but we agreed we should focus on what will work best in the chosen location.

An informal poll tended towards the market as first choice. Those of us who ran a very good event there as part of LIFF in 2018, which was somewhat less well-attended than we'd hoped, were reassured that the space is much better managed these days with regular and good footfall. (This may mean that it's booked up for some time ahead, of course).

Tom asked for volunteers to form a SPROUTS! steering group, and the following kindly volunteered: **Joe Foster, Sue Ottley-Hughes, Dan Palmer, Sarah-Jane Mason, Tom Bliss, and Sonja Woodcock.** And to these we can add **Pete Tatham** from HPS and **Camille, Emma** and/or **Jelenda** from Space 2, and, we hope someone from LPN via **Andy Goldring.**