



**Feed Leeds Meeting -Monday 19<sup>th</sup> June 2023, 4:00pm**  
**Held at the Market Garden Meanwood Valley Urban Farm,**  
**Sugar Well Road, Meanwood, Leeds, LS7 2QG**

### **ATTENDEES**

**Adam Ogilvie** (FL Chair, Meanwood Valley Urban Farm (MVUF)), **Sonja Woodcock** (FL Treasurer, Leeds Food Coordinator at FoodWise Leeds), **Sarah-Jane Mason** (FL secretary – minutes, RHS), **Penny Pinn** (FL, Horsforth Community Café & Garden), **Rosie Atkins** (FL secretary –minutes, FL Farm group); **Jack Weston** (Member of Unite The Community; Leeds, Wakefield and York), **Alan Thornton** (Fruitworks), **Helen Clayton** (LCC Senior Allotment Officer)

### **APOLOGIES**

**Dan Robinson** (Incredible Edible Leeds), **Rosie Hall** (FL, LAF Secretary), **Becky Mears** (FL, IE Aireborough / Season Well CIC)

### **MINUTES**

Minutes from April 2023 were approved (for a copy of the minutes see <https://feedleeds.org/>).

One item was still outstanding – creating a draft position statement and bullet points for campaigning to National Election Candidates re: right to grow, land access etc... Adam and Sonja to work on this.

**Market Garden Tour** The meeting started with a tour of the Market Garden – the garden features a wide range of crop varieties, some sown direct and others started as plug plants. They also have a number of poly tunnels focused on providing early crops and summer salads (lettuce leaves, tomatoes and cucumbers are in high demand for the Veg boxes as the summer approaches).

Ben updated us on their success recruiting volunteers who work 2 days a week helping with the Veg box scheme and a new training opportunity, using a grant from specialist Horticulture Finnis Scott Foundation: <https://www.finnis-scott-foundation.org.uk>. The Market Garden will be working with the Biodynamic College <https://bdacollege.org.uk> to deliver a 2 year Traineeship. This allows them to take on a trainee each year so someone will be trained for 12 months (a full growing year) and then act as a mentor to the next trainee, guiding them through their first growing year, sharing skills and experience. More details to follow when they begin recruitment.

We then visited the garden and learnt how the Market Garden is working on a 6 year organic crop rotation (so no crops from the same family are grown in the same bed for 6 years). This is a longer rotation than a traditional crop rotation and has a two-fold benefit

1. It helps to ensure pests and diseases which are specific to a certain crop (such as fungal diseases like onion white rot) are not allowed to take hold in the soils. The rotation ensures that the diseases/pests are unable to survive without the host crop.

2. It allows time to naturally replenish nutrients in the soil which may have been taken up by certain crops (e.g. leafy crops use up a lot of Nitrogen, Beetroot take up Boron). Other soil improvement methods like mulches, green manures and homemade composts are used to ensure a good balanced soil.

When asked the question “where are all your slugs” Ben confirmed that they do have slugs on site but there are very few places for them to hide out as nearly all the space is cultivated and rough areas are few and far between. Also by growing at scale with for instance a large number of different leaf crop varieties the impact of the slugs is less obvious than in smaller areas. If you have 400 lettuce you worry less about damage to a handful than if you were only growing 4 lettuce.

**Thanks so much to Ben and Luke for hosting our Feed Leeds meeting and for providing a tour of the site.**

## 1. **Feed Leeds Current projects: Sub groups reports**

- **Sow a Row Xtra , LVL and Hedge Veg :**

The LVL subgroup have been meeting to discuss how to take forward our idea about offering seasonal training in the city. The group successfully applied for funding from the Leeds Climate Action Fund to hold a LVL themed event to engage Climate Action Hubs and our members.

The workshop was delivered at Left Bank on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> June, to over 30 attendees (some of whom signed up online, others were at Left Bank as part of the Wednesday night drop ins). The event discussed the concept of having a little veg library in their communities – What can be shared in a LVL? What concerns did people have about installing one and (for those with LVLs) what has been most successful or surprising about having a LVL. Individuals and groups also completed a pledge, sharing what action they would be taking following the event.

Attendees then took part in a number of activities including seed sowing in fruit punnets or paper pots, pricking out seedlings and painting LVL signs. Becky also brought along a soil blocker to demonstrate growing without pots by compressing compost into blocks.

The attendees have all been signed up to the Feed Leeds mailing list and will be contacted via email with additional links to organisations and resources following the event. The [Potting Shed](#) facebook group is also being used to connect attendees and share growing advice.

- **Land Access:**

The Urban Agriculture Consortium Policy Influencers Network Group event on May 24<sup>th</sup> discussed the **Incredible Edible Right to Grow campaign**, and Leeds was well represented by Dan Robinson (IE Leeds), Katie Dye (Climate Emergency Action Committee (CEAC)) and Ed Carlisle (Green Party).

It was agreed that a deputation to the council should be created via the CEAC as any change of Land Access in Leeds would require a number of departments to work together. At a minimum LCC Green Spaces, Highways and Procurement would need to be involved in discussions.

We also discussed the need for good quality agricultural land rather than low grade sites such as old car parks/building plots if we wish to grow substantial quantities for the city locally. There was also a discussion about the council tree planting policy and how although this is a good idea in principal the land being used could have potential for other uses as some of the trees have been planted on land bought from farmers so may have been good for growing commercially.

Sonja confirmed that the next **Food Strategy Meeting** will be held on the 10<sup>th</sup> July and will be the

perfect opportunity to share ideas and questions.

09:00 – 12:30. Civic Hall, Banquet Hall Portland Crescent Leeds LS1 1UR. Book your place here (<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/leeds-food-strategy-action-plan-workshop-tickets-641149885567>)

There are also two options to take part in Health and Wellbeing planning events arranged by Foodwise, University of Leeds and Leeds City Council.

Workshop 1 - In Person Workshop at Technorth Family Learning Centre, 9 Harrogate Rd, Chapel Allerton, Leeds LS7 3NB on the 25th July at 10am to 12pm.

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/food-for-health-and-wellbeing-workshop-1-in-person-leeds-food-strategy-tickets-652595770517>

Workshop 2- Online Workshop on the 26th July at 10am to 12pm

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/food-for-health-and-wellbeing-workshop-2-online-leeds-food-strategy-tickets-652693813767>

- **Farm Group:**

Rosie confirmed that the group have updated their information on the [FL website](#) to reflect the new group members and activities. They have also agreed a purpose as follows (Agreed 20.2.23):

*The group comes out of Feed Leeds' recognition of the importance of urban and peri-urban agricultural food supply, from regenerative and eco-agricultural and small-scale producers, in providing healthy food and helping to address the climate crisis. Initially this group aims to provide support under two main inter-related themes:*

- *Existing growers: Support to existing regenerative growers, farmers, producers and retailers including the development of links between growers, producers and consumers, strengthening the food economy and resilient supply system.*
- *FarmStart: Supporting new entrants by addressing the need for training and the issues of access to land for growing using the "FarmStart" model shared by Land Workers Alliance and Urban Agriculture Consortium. Also by exploring the possibility of mentoring and apprenticeships for new entrants with existing regenerative peri-urban farmers.*

The group arranged a visit to Swillington Organic Farm the winner of the Best Organic Box Scheme in the UK, to look at the small holding which is soon to become available as the current tenants are moving to Scotland to establish a larger small holding, and hope to be self-sufficient. Rob Knowles is very keen to look into whether this could be a suitable Farm Start site.

The farm are advertising as follows:

[Experienced grower for Share Farming Opportunity at Swillington Organic Farm in Yorkshire.](#)

Well established CSA on certified organic land is looking for enthusiastic person to take the business forward. Plenty of scope for expansion, minimum capital required. Looking for an experienced grower able to produce business as well as cropping plans. Further opportunities on farm could be available as the owner is heading for retirement.

Further details please visit [SwillingtonOrganicFarm.co.uk](http://SwillingtonOrganicFarm.co.uk) and email [jo.cartwright@swillingtonorganicfarm.co.uk](mailto:jo.cartwright@swillingtonorganicfarm.co.uk) for an informal chat about the opportunity.

T Follow us [twitter.com/swillingtonfarm](https://twitter.com/swillingtonfarm)

F Like us [facebook.com/swillingtonfarm](https://facebook.com/swillingtonfarm)

They would also like to visit Kiddal Quarry Farm and speak to the University about their Farm on A64 which is being used for livestock (pigs) but has potential to grow much more food and potential employ students/train farmers of the future. Sonja confirmed that Clare SURNAME? is mapping all the Leeds Farms/Farmers to show where and what is being grown as a baseline of evidence.

The group are also in contact with LCC re: procurement across the city, which feeds into the Sustainable Food Cities work being carried out by Foodwise.

Rosie also confirmed that the [6" of Soil film](#) has achieved its funding target and will be available from September. We aim to could host a social event to show the film to our members and others who are interested.

**ACTION ALL** Consider potential venues where the film could be shown and share with the committee.

- **Composting Collective**

This pilot projects at Garforth and Seacroft have been so successful that Foodwise have recruited a Development Worker 2 days a week to set up an additional 6 sites across the city. The lessons learned and good practice from the pilots are now being used to create an improved business model for sustainable community composting.

- **Orchard Group:**

Alan and Gini continue to work supporting community orchards across Leeds and offering help to schools in Bradford. They are expanding their growing nursery and will have 3 sites soon (West Leeds Activity Centre, Keighley and Living Potential Farm Wetherby). They are still on the hunt for a site where growing and selling can occur and would welcome any ideas from the members.

Next course: 5<sup>th</sup> July - Pruning in Wortley. Check out the events listed on the website

<https://www.fruitworks.org.uk/events>

**ACTION: All** if you know of any potential land which might be suitable for a fruit nursery, training space and plant sales please contact Fruitworks.

## 2. FL Members updates

- **Foodwise**

Lots of great work being carried out through a number of campaigns and projects. Sonja confirmed that the city would like to aim for Silver Sustainable Food City Status. The Sustain – Every Mouthful Counts campaign has been shared with LCC and they are working on gathering evidence.

- **Incredible Edible Leeds :**

A huge thanks to everyone who voted, we were successful in our People's Projects funding which was put together to support our existing Incredible Edible groups across Leeds and double this number across the next twelve months. Some of these are already in advanced discussions with community leaders and Whinmoor was installed a couple of weeks ago. The hot weather has been a challenge where watering is concerned but all of the groups have been really responsive on this front. Dan Robinson will be presenting to CEAC on 5<sup>th</sup> July so will update us at the next meeting.

- **Kirkstall Valley Farm:**

Rosie A confirmed that she and Sonja attended the bank holiday event at KVF representing Feed Leeds.

- **MVUF :**  
Adam confirmed that the Farm is doing really well and how great it is to see the Market Garden progressing and expanding. They have a summer fair on the 1<sup>st</sup> July.
- **Horsforth Community Garden:**  
Penny confirmed that the regular volunteer sessions (Thursday afternoon) are well attended and the group are increasing what they grow. The area has also been selected for The Compost Collective Community Composting pilot and the site will be located on Drury Field Community Orchard.

They recently secured 2K funding from Accenture/Change X for a community orchard and soft fruit area. Colas are still able to donate materials and help on site but arranging work dates has not been easy so the work has not progressed as fast as hoped.

The group are also looking forward to the Walk of Art on 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> July <https://www.horsforth-woa.org/> where business', schools, individuals and community spaces open their doors and host activities for all to enjoy. The walk will also feature images submitted to the 'Our Green Horsforth' photo competition.

- **Leeds Allotments**  
Helen confirmed that she has been in post at the council for a year now, to date dealing with issues from the pandemic (no council visits meant some neglected/abandoned plots have become overrun and now need to be visited/contacted and signed off ready for a new tenant).

She has been working hard to reduce the allotment waiting lists across the city but reported that the waiting list is around 1,000. Two factors are influencing the figures and time to link empty allotments with new allotmentees

1. The list is by allotment not person; so the same people are on multiple waiting lists.
2. Once contact is made the council needs to wait for 1 week for a response which delays the process.

Also she confirmed that the council have looked into Roots Allotment scheme to see if this could be a potential solution. She confirmed that the group purchase/lease land in affluent areas with a shortage of council allotments but that the plots are very expensive £99 a month for 12 sq m and that the land is not yet available in Leeds to support the scheme so the plots are not guaranteed to be near the plot holders homes.

Some good news:

- Polly Cook has moved across to head up the LCC Green Spaces team so hopefully support for allotments across the city will improve. Including looking into potential land for new allotment sites (good quality not old garages/carparks)!
- The LCC Allotments and LAF are building a good relationship and supporting each other.
- A new site at Scotchman Lane is being created with 22 new plots (½ plots and ¼ plots available not full plots to enable more people to have a plot).
- A new Assistant Allotment Officer has been recruited and will be starting work in October.

### 3. **.Climate Change Updates**

#### **Climate Action Leeds: Local Community Wealth Building event Tue 25th April**

Sonja and Penny attended this event. It was really useful and inspiring but Climate Action have not been able to get more funding for additional events.

Recruitment for a Horsforth Climate Action Hub Worker – apply by 10<sup>th</sup> July.

<https://www.climateactionleeds.org.uk/post/vacancy-horsforth-climate-action-hub-worker?fbclid=IwAR2WhqPON1mRc3gTrm1ysKYdVZUA0k7DlxQ-NyHCXJ5FspPZEI9J412FIJA>

## 4. AOB

### Feed Leeds Mission Statement

The committee voted to refresh the current mission statement and asked the members for ideas on what Feed Leeds means to them via a [virtual notice board](#). Our current statement is “Feed Leeds is a network of individuals and organisations working in partnership to support local food growing for its social, economic, environmental and health benefits, and to promote healthy, sustainable and affordable food in Leeds.” The ideas have been collated and a new mission statement has been agreed as follows:

*Feed Leeds is a sustainable food growing network – encouraging and connecting individuals, communities and organisations in Leeds.*

### Cross Green Growing Together Event

Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> July - see flyers below for more details and the opera north programme

### LCC Parks Survey on Neat or Natural

The results are available to view here <https://leedsparksforum.org/2023/05/25/neat-or-natural-survey-the-results/> over 800 people completed the survey and in Q7 the responses showed fantastic public support for community food growing and Orchards in Parks.

### Work with Refugees and Asylum Seekers

Jack from [Unite The Community](#) asked whether the Feed Leeds members were able to offer any support to refugees and asylum seekers in the city.

We confirmed that a number of refugee and asylum seeker groups are involved with community green spaces across the city including Pafras, if looking for a growing project near you please check out our community map (MVUF and Armley Allotments already have refugees working with them and Syrian refugees are looking and land by Skelton to install a polytunnel). Also groups like Season Well apply for funding to work with individuals, sharing growing and cooking skills.

Jack also confirmed that a new orchard has been planted by volunteers working with Sarah Shorter, Wyke Beck Valley Project Officer at Yorkshire Wildlife Trust working at Wyke Beck Valley Nature Reserve.

## 5. Date of Next meeting:

Our next meeting will be held on **Monday 21<sup>st</sup> August** – zoom link to follow

We are also looking for groups to host our future meetings – please get in touch if you think you can help. Below are some things to consider if you would like to consider hosting a meeting at your site.

1. Is there somewhere we could sit for a meeting, and a covered area on site in case of bad weather (for up to 10 people)
2. Are you able to provide a tour of the site to share more about the project development and your plans for the space
3. Can you make refreshments on site i.e. tea/coffees for attendees *Not a problem if not, we can ask people to bring their own drinks*
4. What is the address of your site? *Is it easy to find, do we need to give any additional directions?*
5. Is there parking on street / nearby? *If we need to give instructions for parking please advise*



Other dates for your diary



**MEANWOOD FARM SUMMER FAIR**

Sat 1 July 2023, 10am-3pm

Craft stalls – Tombola – Activities  
Live music from Bassa Bassa  
& more! Full details TBC

To book a stall OR offer to volunteer, contact [g.greenley@mvuf.org.uk](mailto:g.greenley@mvuf.org.uk)



**THE HORSFORTH WALK OF ART 2023**

1-2 JULY 11-5PM

High street galleries

Key

- 📍 20000 - Bank Top
- 📍 20000 - The Hub
- 📍 20000 - The Park
- 📍 20000 - The Square
- 📍 20000 - The Terrace

WALK OF ART L58



**COMMUNITY EVENTS**

**THURSDAY 29 JUNE, 3.15pm – 4.30pm**  
Richmond Hill Great Get-Together at Richmond Hill Academy Carpark LS9 8PN

**SATURDAY 1 JULY, 12pm – 4pm**  
Lark in the Park at East End Park LS9 8JX (event run by Leeds City Council)

**SUNDAY 2 JULY, 6pm – 7pm**  
Choral Evensong at St Hilda's Church LS9 0DG

**MONDAY 3 JULY, 12pm – 1pm**  
Party at the Hub at Cross Green Community Hub LS9 0BL

**TUESDAY 4 JULY, from 11am**  
Picnic in the Park at East End Park Bowling Club LS9 9NG

**THURSDAY 6 JULY, 6-7pm**  
Party in the (Car)Park at Edmund House LS9 8QJ

**Friday 7 JULY, 10.30am – 12pm**  
Sing and Share at St Vincent's Centre LS9 9LF

opera north

COMMUNITY FUND



CROSS GREEN GROWING TOGETHER  
With support from the Jubilee Fund

**PARTY AT THE HUB**

Come and discover your local garden space...

**FREE!**  
Drop in

**LOCATION:**  
Cross Green Community Hub LS9 0BL

**DATE:**  
Monday 3 July  
12pm - 1pm

Tea and cake  
Live Music



**GO Falkland – a gathering to reimagine the future of food and farming**

**July 1<sup>st</sup> one-day event** featuring talks and sessions on regenerative farming, sharing knowledge from leading practitioners, soil health specialists, and farmers on the regenerative journey.

The programme is growing – and can be viewed [here](#)– includes talks across soil science, agroforestry, ‘farm to fork’, food health, and practical farming tips, from local to international speakers.

This event is for farmers, small holders, growers, educators, and anyone interested in the health of our soil, planet, food system & population.

Day tickets are available to purchase below £24.00 – £84.00 – these all include booking fee, with full

access to the programme of activities

GO Falkland is hosted by Falkland Estate in Fife, in collaboration with [Groundswell](#) (creators of Groundswell Festival, the annual regenerative farming conference in Hertfordshire, England). Groundswell have worked with Falkland Estate on the programming of GO Falkland.