



Hi Everyone

Hope you are all safe and well, and keeping busy and happy at work, home or in the garden.

Here is our first C19 Newsletter:

- **MEANWOOD VALLEY URBAN FARM** needs your help!



It goes without saying that we're all living through extraordinary and troubling times and unfortunately, I'm afraid that Meanwood Valley Urban Farm is going to struggle to get through this. We are seeking your help to make sure we can open our gates again when this crisis is over.

We've had to close to all our visitors and we can no longer host the 50 sessions for vulnerable adults or the outdoor activities for around 150 local school kids each week. This all means a huge and unprecedented loss of income.

We've launched a fundraising appeal to help us steer the Farm through the crisis. In our 40th year, we had big plans to celebrate our big birthday with you all. And with a little help, I hope we still can. We realise it's a hard time for many people, so any donation you can give would be hugely appreciated.

While we're closed to visitors and participants; life on the Farm goes on. I'm so proud of the staff and volunteers who are still working daily to look after the animals, including our new lambs and chicks, growing food in our market garden and keeping the site safe. We'll continue to look after the Farm and all of the animals throughout this, in line with public health guidance.

I hope you and your loved ones are safe and well and that we can all come together very soon at the Farm to celebrate its 40th year.

Many thanks.

Adam Ogilvie

CEO - Meanwood Valley Urban Farm

<https://justgiving.com/campaign/save-meanwood-farm>

- **TCV HOLLYBUSH**

TCV have issued a newsletter:

<https://mailchi.mp/8cbbb199eef3/hollybush-newsletter-spring-2020?e=8a006f0250>

- **GROWING BETTER**

In better, in fact great news GB has won a substantial Key Fund award of £50k - which should secure the future of the business, and has plans greatly to develop in-the-ground growing alongside a hike in hydroponics. And there are other exciting developments to be announced soon.

Meanwhile, Dorota is about to launch a veg box scheme for key workers, doing one or two deliveries to work places per week (details still being finalised).

Anyone who knows of a key worker who would like a veg box contact Dorota:
[**dorota@growingbetter.co.uk**](mailto:dorota@growingbetter.co.uk)

She is also **on the lookout for a polytunnel - any size, plus woodchip and compost.**

- **FOODWISE LEEDS**

FoodWise Leeds are running a Veg Cities campaign #VegRocks to get Leeds eating and growing more veg. As an engagement activity, jolly painted #vegrockers are being distributed around parks etc. with the intention when they are found people will share photos tagging @foodwiseleeds on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook using the hashtag #vegrockers and moving the rock to another location. Due to the restrictions on movement due to Covid, the painted #vegrockers have only started being distributed around North Leeds (Chapel Allerton, Moortown, Brackenwoods) so far. Please paint your own rocks and share around your community. There will be a competition coming soon!

Here come the veg!

Let's get everyone in Leeds eating & growing more VEG!



Join in the fun!

Look out for #vegrockers and join FoodWise Leeds in celebrating the love of veg!

Share a photo using the hashtag #vegrockers
Or make your own and share around your community!



@foodwiseleeds on Twitter, Instagram & Facebook



- **GROW TO SCHOOL**

Here at Grow to School we are determined to keep things growing through these challenging times. Over the coming weeks we will be sharing practical growing advice and fun learning activities for children and adults at school and at home. April is the time to start sowing seeds.....so.....download our first instalment, round the kids up and get planting now!

<https://www.growtoschool.co.uk/>



Please share with those who you think might benefit from the well-being gardening can bring. Any questions or suggestions do drop us an email grow@growtoschool.co.uk

- **ALICE HEFFORD**

*Alice writes: "We want to bring educational / fun interactive various mediums in to schools and communities on the topic of agriculture. If there is a group in Feeds Leeds which would be interested to get involved let me know. [Hint - **Grow to School, MVUF and Kirkstall Farm?**]"*

I would like to offer my voluntary services, I'm diving in to all things gardening especially focusing on regenerative agriculture. At the moment I've been collecting mulch and twigs to make a raised bed but very much a novice. I'm limited in space where I'm staying so looking at smart ways to get growing. Anyone who may be able to make use of my hands on attitude in return for knowledge, I would be glad to meet them.

Right now, I'm looking for soil and want to plant some tomatoes and peas. Anyone with organic seeds around who would want to do a skills swap? I'm offering Yoga and meditation. Contact Tom for my phone number / email. We can do remote skills swap or distance gardening.

- **COVID-19 ADVICE FOR GROWERS**

Finally, here is some great advice from the National Allotment Society:

<https://www.nsalg.org.uk/news/covid19-information/>

Protect yourself and your family. We are all living through a crisis, the likes of which the country has not experienced since war time. The community spirit that exists on allotment sites is now vitally important. Please remember to look out for one another during these very difficult times and take all the steps you can to reduce the risk of contagion from the Covid- 19 virus when you visit the plot.

Covid -19 - The virus that causes COVID 19 is mainly transmitted through droplets generated when an infected person coughs, sneezes or speaks. The droplets are too heavy to hang in the air and they quickly fall and contaminate floors and surfaces. Smaller airborne particles can remain in the air for some time. You can be infected by breathing in the virus if you are within close proximity of a person who has Covid-19- hence the 2m social distancing requirement, or by touching a contaminated surface and then touching your eyes, nose or mouth before washing your hands.

Can I still work my allotment during the Covid19 lockdown? Yes, allotments are a great way of both getting exercise and obtaining food during this crisis.

Can I visit the allotment with my family? Yes, government guidelines state that you can exercise with members of your household

Why then is the NAS suggesting that we consider going alone to the plot? This is just a suggestion and plot-holders can decide for themselves but we are looking at the bigger picture and concerned about the risk of sites being shut – as they have been in Ireland and France. If some plot-holders are happy to visit alone or stay away for a few weeks that reduces this risk.

How long can I stay at the plot? Government Ministers have suggested that an hour's walk is reasonable and asked us all to limit time spent outside the home. The Society believes

that if you are using your plot for daily exercise it would be reasonable to spend an hour or two doing the jobs that need doing for that day and then to return home.

How can I ensure my family's and everyone else's safety at the plot?

Do not attend the plot if you have coronavirus symptoms or a family member is self-isolating. Take a flask of hot water, soap and paper towels to the plot with you (cold water will work too). Use hand sanitiser (should be 60% alcohol content) before entering the site and opening any gate locks. Wash hands for at least 20 seconds after closing the lock, dry with a paper towel. **The most effective part of hand washing is the drying using preferably paper towel to remove the layer of dead skin scales - on which virus and bacteria sit.**

Paper towel to compost heap. DO NOT touch your face after using anything that has been touched by other people- use an elbow to work the push taps. Wash your hands again for 20 seconds, dry with a paper towel before opening and closing the lock to leave the site. Use hand sanitiser after closing the lock. Wash hands when you get home. DO NOT gather together for a chat even if you are 2 metres apart. Observe "Social Distancing" with each other 2-3 metres. If you take your children to the plot, ensure that they stay within its confines and do not run around on communal paths and spaces. Do not share tools. Do not wash your hands in water troughs.

Can I drive to my allotment? We do not have an overall answer to this question. Police forces are clamping down on non-essential travel, some have said that a short drive to the plot is permitted if there is no other choice, others are still enforcing the prohibition on driving to exercise. Check with your local force. Walk to the plot if at all possible and do not take public transport.

What about if I have hens or other livestock to care for at the plot? Animal welfare considerations mean that this would be seen as essential travel even if further movement restrictions are put in place.

What changes should Allotment Associations make to site management?

Pin up information about social distancing and hygiene on a notice board or the gate, there is a QR code at the bottom of this page that links to our updating page. Undertake risk assessments and take appropriate action to reduce hazards around any areas of the site that could cause contagion e.g. communal water troughs, taps, and gate locks. The NAS does have further detailed information on risk assessments and the duty of care for Self-Managed Associations please email natsoc@nsalg.org.uk if this is required. All communal facilities including toilets should be closed. It is essential that no un-authorized people are allowed onto the plots for the duration of this emergency, if you do wish to bring someone

to assist with work on the plot, please ensure that that this is notified either to Secretary or Site Manager. Careful consideration should be given to introducing anyone over 70, those with underlying illness or pregnant women.

Shops - those Associations who operate shops should close or put an on-line scheme in place. Where goods are ordered by email, payment is electronic and goods are placed out for collection. [CLICK HERE](#) for an example

Bonfires - Could those Associations who allow bonfires all year round ask people to consider their neighbours and not burn anything during this covid19 emergency. Many sites are surrounded by houses where vulnerable people may be getting their only bit of fresh air through an open window. Plot inspections and allocations should be postponed until they can be done safely and within government guidelines. It is likely that a percentage of plot-holders will be unable to visit their plots, perhaps a buddy system could be put in place, untended plots could at least be covered. Click on the link to read about [self isolating](#) Click on the link to read about [social distancing](#). Government advice about the Coronavirus is updated on a regular basis at this link.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public>

Stay safe everyone - see you soon as possible!

Tom