



Minutes and News

FL December General Meeting: 14 12 20: Zoom.

Attending: **Rosie Atkins** (Leeds Rotters, LESSN), **Sonja Woodcock** (Treasurer, Leeds Food Coordinator at FoodWise Leeds), **Joe Foster** (Leeds Allotments Federation), **Dan Robinson** (IE Garforth), **Becky Mears** (IE Aireborough / Season Well), **Paul Magnall** (Leeds Rotters, Rainbow Junktion), **Alan Thornton** and **Gini Morandi** (Fruit Works Co-op), **Sarah-Jane Mason** (RHS), **Lizzi Pel** (Moortown Community Allotment), **Adam Ogilvie** (Meanwood Valley Urban Farm), **Tom Bliss** (Chair and minutes).

Apologies: **Gill Murray** (IE Garforth and Luminare Education Group), **Jeremy Isles** (Urban Agriculture Consortium), **Camille Thomas** (Space 2), **Robbie Goodfellow** (Eat Your Greens).

Committee: Tom reported that with two exceptions, all of the committee are happy to remain in post. Of the two exceptions, one is yet to respond and the other, **Paul Ackroyd**, has, sadly, decided that it's time to move on. Paul has been a major champion of Feed Leeds since the very first meeting, providing generous support throughout his time as manager of LCC nurseries, at Redhall and then The Arium, and through into his role as a trustee at Meanwood Valley Urban Farm (which actually came about through his attending a Feed Leeds meeting on site). Our heartfelt thanks go to Paul, who we hope to still see when working with the farm. Meanwhile, CEO **Adam Ogilvie** has kindly agreed to stand at the January meeting, which is excellent news - we'll continue holding events at MVUF as soon as the rules allow, with the next LESSN workshop scheduled for April 1st. To complete the set, we're delighted to advise that **Roger Plumtree** Chair of Kirkstall Valley Farm is also standing in January - see below.

AGM: This is due in January or February. As Tom has now been acting and/or actual Chair, and/or Secretary, for way longer than the maximum permitted period of 3 years, on top of his long-standing role as Comms Officer, (which he's happy to continue), it's become inevitable that he stand down from both roles at the AGM. Feed Leeds is in good heart, not least because of excellent strategic work by FoodWise Leeds and multiple exciting initiatives by multiple members, so there's no reason this should present a challenge - as long as suitable candidates come forward. We've therefore decided to hold the **AGM in February**, to give more time people to find their hats, look at them quizzically for an appropriate period, and then toss them, ringwards, with enthusiasm. (Anyone may stand as Chair or Secretary, though it tends to help if candidates have either been on the committee or attended regularly, so they will understand how things have been done, even if they are promoting change).

LEEDS CITY COUNCIL: CEAC AND **NEW LEEDS FOOD CHAMPION**

Leeds has signed the Glasgow Food and Climate Declaration ahead of COP26 - one of 13 early signatories. (The launch lunch took place on the same day as our meeting). FoodWise has also signed, and Feed Leeds will do so as soon as we can work out how (the form implies governments only)!

<https://www.glasgowdeclaration.org/signatories>

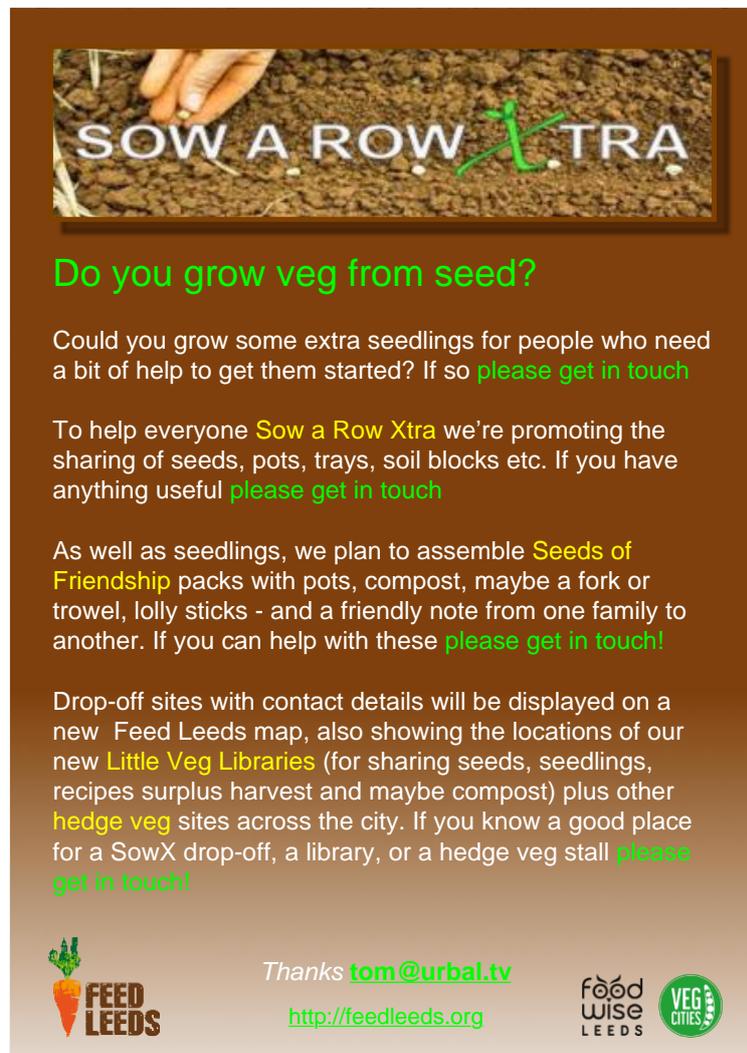
Huge thanks are due to Sonja for her persistence with this. The most important early outcome is that Cllr Mulherin has today appointed a Food Champion within the council; **Cllr Abigail Marshall-Katung** from Woodhouse, to whom Sonja has written, requesting a meeting, with Tom, Sat Man and Adam included if convenient. We strongly welcome Abigail's appointment, and hope we can also secure a senior civil

servant to ensure that food is as central to all activity across the council as it is to our own digestive systems.

Meanwhile, reports from the CEAC Food and Biodiversity Group confirm that food will indeed be the next main focus of activity, with a suggestion that a speaker on soil may be invited to the next meeting.

SOW A ROW EXTRA (SowX)

The latest version of the flier looks like this - please comment if you have suggestions:



Do you grow veg from seed?

Could you grow some extra seedlings for people who need a bit of help to get them started? If so **please get in touch**

To help everyone **Sow a Row Xtra** we're promoting the sharing of seeds, pots, trays, soil blocks etc. If you have anything useful **please get in touch**

As well as seedlings, we plan to assemble **Seeds of Friendship** packs with pots, compost, maybe a fork or trowel, lolly sticks - and a friendly note from one family to another. If you can help with these **please get in touch!**

Drop-off sites with contact details will be displayed on a new **Feed Leeds** map, also showing the locations of our new **Little Veg Libraries** (for sharing seeds, seedlings, recipes surplus harvest and maybe compost) plus other **hedge veg** sites across the city. If you know a good place for a SowX drop-off, a library, or a hedge veg stall **please get in touch!**

Thanks **tom@urbal.tv**
<http://feedleeds.org>

FEED LEEDS **Food Wise LEEDS** **VEG CITIES**

Please get in touch if you can help with any of the above.

To date Gipton Growers, Hollin Lane Allotments, Meanwood Valley Urban Farm and others have expressed an interest in sowing extra. **Tom to collate a list of offers, and incorporate a sign-up facility (including number of plants wanted) into the new SowX/LVL web page if technically feasible.**

We all agreed that we'll need to match supply and demand closely if this is to work. Lots of people already grow extra seedlings, and sometimes it can be difficult to dispose of them all - which flags up both opportunities of supply and risks of excess. There's also the issue of where the 'customers' will be able to grow-on the seedlings, so the provision of pots and kits could help greatly, hence the **Seeds of Friendship** boxes (thanks to Tina Brocklebank of LASSN for that idea).

It was agreed that SowX really needs a project co-ordinator, so Sonja offered limited time from Lucy, (FoodWise/Veg Cities officer), to scope demand from LASSN, but we will really need someone to manage supply and delivery beyond LASSN, which suggests a funded post, either by Feed Leeds or one of our member groups. Becky offered to help scope this. **Sonja and Becky to discuss funding options for staff time, and make an application.**

Adam confirmed that Meanwood might be able to provide plugs, which would make life a great deal easier, but they would not be able to do this without either funding or a small charge. **Adam and Luke to investigate funding options for soil plugs, also scoping out Tom's idea of having people bring their own soil/compost for bricking, and then share possible costs.**

LITTLE VEG LIBRARIES / HEDGE VEG SITES (LVLs)

Discussion around a location for the second stall brought a suggestion from Alan that we should again contact the Little Book Library people to see if siting both types of stall together would help with visibility and security. As Becky was anyway keen to host LVL 2 (LVL 1 is designated for Garforth near Dan's house), and there is a book stall not far from her house, it was agreed that Becky should make enquiries to see if this could work in Guiseley. Other members have also offered sites - roll out to these would depend on funding for further stalls, and/or other methods of creation. Suggestions are welcome. **Becky to talk to the local Little Library.**

Tom has spoken to MyHedgeVeg again, and though Del keen to continue a dialogue towards a possible roll out to Leeds, this may take some time to realise. So for the time being it makes sense for us to have our own map and sign-up form, hosted on our website. **Tom to design new page/s - incorporating SowX. Sonja to convene subcommittee meeting with Neil, to include Tom, Sonja, Becky, Dan, Rosie (anyone else interested)?**

MOORTOWN COMMUNITY ALLOTMENT

Liz is trying to establish an allotment at her Housing Association in Moortown, and had got as far as approaching the landlords who have not said no, but do keep moving the goalposts. Various people offered ideas and advice, including starting with an orchard (with Fruit Works), and contacting the Jewish Welfare Board for funding then employing Season Well, Lemon Balm (who are working with Leeds Housing), Hyde Park Source, TCV or similar, to provide reassuring construction experience. Liz has already tried this as she has the necessary experience herself (she volunteers with TCV), but has not so far managed to secure permissions. Alan pointed out that landlords are often cautious due to the risk of projects failing, then needing to be removed and the site reinstated, so recruiting a clearly committed group of growers might be the first step. Liz had in fact created a survey for residents when the lock-down halted progress. Sonja suggested contacting local councillors, especially Moortown's Cllr Charlwood, who is supportive of sustainable food in Leeds, mentioning the climate emergency and the need for more allotments as outlined in our recent Policy Brief, and copy to the landlords and Feed Leeds.

FRUIT WORKS CO-OP

Gini and Alan provided an overview of this very welcome project, which builds on Alan's excellent long-standing work with Helping Britain Blossom and The Orchard Project (which have both now closed). They will be offering a service to community groups and schools in Bradford and Leeds, running courses on things like pruning and grafting, and have established two fruit tree nurseries in the Stanningley / Kirkstall area. Leeds actually has an unusually high number of community orchards at 70 (not least thanks to Alan's previous work), but there's only one existing commercial nursery in the area. They are also working

closely with the well-established Sheffield Fruit Trees Co-op. One current project is a community orchard in Alderton Rise, West Moortown (north of the ring road).

Alan has been impressed by a recent major grant award for agro-forestry (twelve thousand new fruit and nut trees) secured by The Kindling Trust in Manchester from the DEFRA's Green Recovery Challenge Fund. He suggested that Feed Leeds might put together something along the same lines for the next funding round, which we'd be keen to do because this would greatly benefit a range of member groups and help the fit with White Rose / Northern Forest and LCC Woodland Creation work - about which we agreed re the problems caused by lack of community consultation, and lack of fruit trees. Tom suggested that Fruit Works should join the Leeds Parks and Green Spaces Forum to better engage with Leeds groups. **Anyone interested in developing a bid, or with prior experience of this fund, to contact Alan. Alan also to help Tom to update the FL orchard map (EG: Dan mentioned orchards in Garforth not currently on the map).**

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/agroforestry-and-the-basic-payment-scheme>

FARM UPDATES

Farm Forum. Membership to date includes Feed Leeds, The Organic Pantry, Patchwork Farm, and Meanwood Valley Urban Farm. Tom has approached all the other farmers he knows, some have yet to reply, others have declined. **Tom to contact Swillington and Makins [Done]. Caroline is also recruiting.**

Kirkstall Valley Farm - from the latest KVDT Newsletter: *We're really geared up for that post-Covid Spring. This is the big year. We've done much of the preparation and in the New Year will be putting up extra polytunnels and creating a visitor and storage compound thanks to a £26,000 grant from the Veolia Trust. For 18 months we have been getting things ready, now we have to deliver. The Grower will be appointed in February and we'll need all the volunteers we can get as the restrictions begin to lift. We're clearer than ever that it's not all about veg. Healthy living is about enjoying yourself with others at the farm, appreciating nature and learning about what we eat. Our first forays into family events were a great success. We want to do more social activities for both members and the community. Your membership subscription will allow us to be more than growers and to turn the Farm into a real community asset. Creating a new inner city community farm is a big deal. It's very rare, and we're lucky to have the opportunity. Please help us succeed.*

Rosie introduced Tom to the project Chair, **Roger Plumtree**, who asked to join the FL mailing list/advisory group. In a very productive chat, Tom shared with Roger the extensive previous work done by Feed Leeds and Leeds Beckett, which, though now somewhat out of date, includes various ideas which might yet prove useful. Tom also invited Roger to stand for election to the FL committee at the January meeting, to help maintain strong communications, and Roger kindly agreed to do so.

YORKSHIRE FOOD GROUP

Members now includes Zero Carbon Yorkshire , Calderdale, Leeds, Sheffield, Doncaster, Hull, York, Huddersfield, Middlesbrough, Huddersfield, Bradford, York, Wakefield and Goole. Still no contact in Bradford (last month's minutes lied about this, sorry). Tom is still tying. **Anyone know any food champions in Bradford?**

NEXT MEETING

General Meeting: Monday 25nd Jan - 4.00 pm. (AGM is penciled for Monday 22nd Feb - 4.00 pm).

Please advise if you cannot attend. We may be able to reschedule.