



## Minutes and News

FL January General Meeting: 25 01 21: Zoom.

**Attending:** **Rosie Atkins** (FL, Leeds Rotters, LESSN), **Sonja Woodcock** (FL Treasurer, Leeds Food Coordinator at FoodWise Leeds), **Polly Cook** (Leeds City Council Chief Officer, Sustainable Energy and Air Quality), **James Harrison** (Feeding Coventry, Patchwork Farm), **Katie Allen** (PhD researcher University of Leeds), **Maddie Longhurst** (Urban Agriculture Consortium), **Cllr John Illingworth**, **Joe Foster** (FL, Leeds Allotments Federation), **Dan Robinson** (FL, IE Garforth), **Becky Mears** (FL, IE Aireborough / Season Well), **Paul Magnall** (FL, Leeds Rotters, Rainbow Junction), **Sarah-Jane Mason** (FL, RHS), **Lizzi Pel** (Moortown Community Allotment. XR and Our Future Leeds), **Adam Ogilvie** (FL, Meanwood Valley Urban Farm), **Tom Bliss** (FL Acting Chair and Secretary).

**Apologies:** **Alan Thornton** (Fruit Works Co-op), **Jeremy Isles** (Urban Agriculture Consortium), **Caroline Scott** (FL, Patchwork Farm), **Sue Ottley-Hughes** (FL, Friends of Stank Hall Barn), **Roger Plumtree** (FL, Kirkstall Valley Farm), **Jenny Fisher** (Leeds City Council), **Simon Jose** (Sustainable Communities Alliance CIC, Wakefield).

**Committee:** Meanwood Valley Urban Farm CEO **Adam Ogilvie** (who is nominally the founder of Feed Leeds) stood for election to the committee, and was duly elected unanimously. **Roger Plumtree** Chair of Kirkstall Valley Farm was unable to attend at the last minute, but was duly elected unanimously in absentia. Having both Adam and Roger on the core group is a big step forward for Feed Leeds given the challenges ahead, and we welcome both with thanks.

**AGM:** This is set for February 22nd at 4pm. The excellent news is that **Adam Ogilvie** has kindly offered to stand as chair, so will be proposed by Tom and seconded by Sonja. Sarah-Jane has offered to job-share the role of secretary, not having capacity to take it on full time - so if someone is willing to take on the other half of the task, that would be really helpful in giving Tom time to devote to comms and research work.

**Insurance:** We acquired insurance for the postponed SPROUTS! event but do not have enough money in the kitty to renew this year. Following discussion in which we agreed that it would be relatively easy to reinstate cover as and when needed, it was decided to let the policy lapse for the time being. **[The policy has now been stopped].**

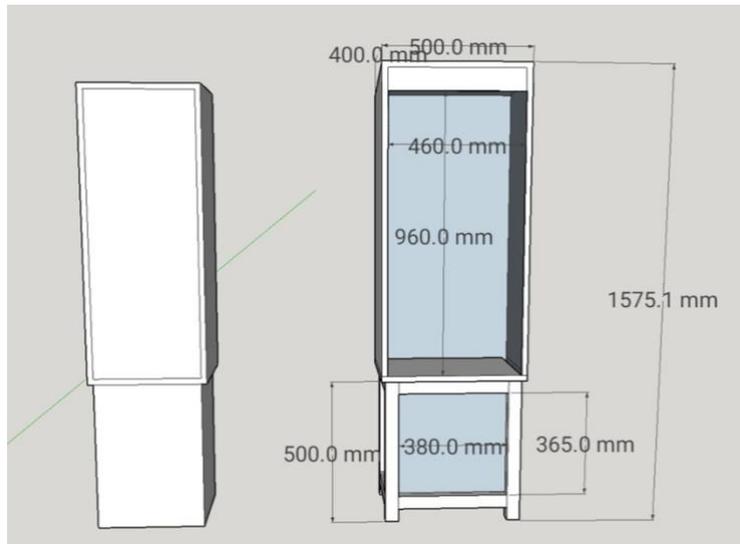
### **LITTLE VEG LIBRARIES (LVL), SOW A ROW EXTRA (SowX) etc.**

This is largely being progressed by Sonja, Becky and Dan. Tom has added a page to the website for all the related but separate 2020 winter initiatives, which will expand as required. The locations of LVLs, SowX hubs, hedge veg sites and compost hubs will be added to the map as the projects roll out.

[http://www.turnstone.tv/NEW\\_FL/2020-plans.html](http://www.turnstone.tv/NEW_FL/2020-plans.html)

### **LVLs**

Neil Hollingworth, who has volunteered to make the first two prototypes has submitted this basic plan:



The upper box will have a perspex door, plus shelves for seeds, literature, seeds and anything else needing to be kept dry such as more delicate veg, with the lower shelf used for seedlings and more robust veg. The LVL logo (to be designed) will be 'branded' into the wood. Tom suggested a larger pediment at the top (triangular?) to allow for more prominent branding (we'll need a laminated notice to explain the project on the side, too). Sara-Jane asked about the height and stability - would the legs be sunk into the ground? Perhaps the lower section should be slightly wider. Sonja is unsure if the proportions of the two boxes are right - **discussion to be continued by email - Sonja to co-ordinate.**

The stability issue raised again the issue of insurance, but we agreed that it was best for the hosting group to carry this as local ownership will be the key to this project. Dan is happy to provide insurance for both the two prototypes in Garforth and Guiseley.

Becky has now met with her local Little Leeds (book) Library organiser who is keen to collaborate, and for the veg library to be sited next to the book equivalent in Guiseley.

## SowX

Sow a Row Xtra (SowX) is a campaign to encourage people to grow a few extra seedlings, and then donate these to people who are keen to grow veg but are unable to start from seed for one reason or another. SowX consists of:

- 1) A confidential list of volunteer growers, curated by Feed Leeds. [Click here](#) to volunteer. Download the [SowX flier](#).
- 2) A list of SowX Hubs, published on our [map](#), where volunteer growers can take their seedlings, and collect materials to support their seed-growing, such as seeds, compost, trays, pots, plugs etc. if needed and available (funding will be secured to support this if possible). Hub contact details are published so growers can contact their nearest hub to a bring or collect materials. Please contact your local hub directly - using the details on the map - to keep the system quick and efficient. [Click here](#) to be a hub.
- 3) A confidential list of recipients, collated by Feed Leeds with help from partners such as LASSN. Typically, seedlings will be collected from hubs by partners and distributed locally, but anyone in need may contact a hub directly, and make a case for free seedlings. (Hubs which routinely sell spare seedlings will also be listed, to provide a cheap alternative). [Click here](#) if you know of people needing seedlings.

The plan is to work initially with two groups. The first is LASSN (refugee and asylum seekers) who have evidence of demand and confidence on how the scheme can be delivered. Through FoodWise, Veg Cities officer Lucy will have some capacity to assist with this. The second is people in food poverty, delivered through a pilot project in the Meanwood area. Becky has applied for funding for this and further development.

Early feedback flags yet again the need for access to fresh food which is frequently not available from food banks

(see below re Simon Jose item for more on this). SowX will also provide advice and training on both how to grow and where to grow - from pots to plots to community growing schemes and both new allotments and 'non-allotments' (safe growing sites outwith the official allotment provision, in places where our target growers live). The scheme will also provide additional evidence of the need for more land for growing in Leeds - one of FL's core priorities - and help to drive through the many current barriers to this. Although the project has only two initial pilots, we are keen for others to join if they can help deliver to people in need of seedlings and support.

SowX also includes **Seeds of Friendship** (SoF Box): a supporting project in which repurposed cardboard boxes are filled by participating SowX Hubs with donated pots, compost, seeds, tools, and - most importantly - a friendly letter from a family, group or individual. SoF Boxes will be shared as available - typically to those with the greatest need. If funding can be secured, more SoF Boxes will be made and shared.

Sonja also shared this link to Grow a Row Cambridge for reference:

<https://www.vegcities.org/news/jan21-vegcitiescambridge/>

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

**Polly Cook** has replaced Tom Knowland as FL's LCC primary contact within our Advisory Group. She advised the meeting that she (as Chief Officer, Sustainable Energy and Air Quality), **Eve Roodhouse** (Chief Officer, Culture and Economy) and **Tony Cooke** (Chief Officer, Health) have all been given a brief to include food in their existing remits, and will be working closely with the pre-existing internal LCC Food Group led by long-term FL contact and FoodWise Steering Group lead **Emma Strachan**. Cllr John Illingworth expressed strong support for these moves. Tom reminded Polly that it was a key suggestion of our Food Policy brief that LCC should arrange for at least one senior officer to have the word food and/or agriculture in their job title, to provide essential visibility and ownership. Polly replied that though this was not likely to happen immediately, food was rapidly moving up the council's agenda, and would be much more visible in communications henceforth, with new channels into the food officers being created. Feed Leeds and FoodWise both remain committed to assisting LCC in these efforts, and we are keen to meet with the Climate Emergency Action Committee again as soon is suitable.

Anyone with climate-related food news can send an email to [climate.emergency@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:climate.emergency@leeds.gov.uk) and copy to in [polly.cook@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:polly.cook@leeds.gov.uk). She will also assist with communication and promotion of other activities such as Little Veg Libraries through outlets such as the new Food page on the Leeds By Example website <https://www.leedsbyexample.co.uk/food>. (Sonja and Tom can also assist with promotion through Feed Leeds and FoodWise Leeds websites and social media). **Polly to arrange for links to Feed Leeds and FoodWise Leeds from Leeds By Example food page.**

Polly also gave notice of the **new [Yorkshire and Humber Climate Commission](#)**, [announced on Wednesday], which will have a strong focus on resilience, and therefore food. This is just the sort of project that justifies the creation of the Yorkshire Food group, and will be helpful to the research and other projects below.

Tom, Sonja, Polly and Foodwise Chair Sat Mann then met with our new Food Champion **Cllr Abigail Marshall-Katung** Woodhouse and Obesity Champion **Cllr Hannah Bithell** on the Wednesday after the FL meeting for a general introduction and scoping conversation. Both have kindly agreed to sign up for the mailing lists of both organisations, and we hope they will be able to attend meetings, with an objective of helping to line up activity by the council and local food groups, charities and businesses towards what are already clearly, shared objectives.

## **CECAP (Climate Emergency Community Action Programme)**

There were various questions regarding progress on this - which includes a part time post of climate/food officer (food is a recurring theme rather than an official Work Programme), the advertising for which has been delayed.

Sonja and Tom also attended the CECAP meeting on the Wednesday after the FL meeting. The group have now recruited a number of the posts enabled by lottery funding, and are running workshops around the philosophy and academic methodology of activism. How the project will move towards tangible climate action, empowering

existing climate-related groups, and enabling the creation of new groups where there are gaps in the current climate activism landscape, will hopefully emerge in the coming weeks or months.

Becky shared how to subscribe to the mailing list via the Our Future Leeds Site, which is not easy to find if you are not aware of the connection: Follow this link and scroll to the very bottom of the page: <https://ourfutureleeds.org/intro-to-cecacp/>

Liz also advised that the contact is [matt.gordon@ourfutureleeds.org](mailto:matt.gordon@ourfutureleeds.org). You can email him and ask to be added to the CECAP slack channel, and so receive meeting invites.

## **RESEARCH**

Tom, Sonja, Paola and Polly are meeting on Thursday to begin the process of adapting the Leeds Climate Commission [CARA framework](#) (Climate Action Readiness Assessment) to look at the readiness of the Leeds' food system in moving to (mitigation) and then remaining at (resilience) zero carbon - while simultaneously addressing the health, economic and poverty issues which need to be enhanced and not damaged by the decarbonisation process. Once this is done, we will run a third workshop, to which all contacts will be invited, to populate the framework with data and expert opinion. This will then be published as a follow-up report to the food policy brief, to provide a focused road map for the food industry and other actors. **Anyone interested in assisting with this would be very welcome to join.**

## **SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES ALLIANCE CIC**

Simon Jose, with whom Tom has been in discussion over some years and who is on the FL mailing list, was unable to attend, but he is starting what is planned to be a commercially viable (rather than funded) food scheme in Wakefield which may need to expand towards South Leeds to achieve critical mass. This will be working with major wholesalers including bagging companies, who can buy very cheaply, supermarkets (starting with Morrisons), local farmers and other growers, and will sit between food banks and supermarkets to deliver fresh food at three prices for current users of food banks who may not be offered fresh food for various difficult-to-solve reasons.

*Edit from Simon:*

*"I am looking at setting up a series of fresh food outlets based on having some food retailer that sits between food banks and supermarkets. I can source most fresh food from wholesalers who will deliver. Mostly the prices are substantially cheaper than supermarkets or, at least equal to them, with Tesco/Asda/Morrisons taken as a benchmark. Delivery would be through pop-up (also exploring static pre-fabs) stores at community anchors/schools. Also keen to move away from supermarket and other surplus model. The three tier price structure, with higher prices funding the project, lower for those in need and a third based on food banks with money donations. We did a pilot at Lightwaves in Wakefield and used the feedback to determine gaps in supply. Result: Need to add ambient goods to fresh food + amends for cultural differences. Finally looking at farm supplying direct but this is unlikely to kick in until a certain volume is achieved. Logistics prevent the model from working i.e. driving to Lincolnshire for potatoes means transport costs wipe out any profit. Am speaking to NFU (thanks for the contact Tom). I will look at projects mentioned in these minutes but can also flag up projects abroad (I know the Brighton & Hove Food Partnership and others there are looking at similar models). Local authorities could also look at land/property used for food production but it's somewhat of a gap on my knowledge.*

Tom having outlined the proposal from memory there was enthusiastic discussion with most agreeing this was a necessary and timely development. James has experience of this from Coventry - notably [social supermarkets](#). It also fits into existing Leeds projects like the Patchwork farm, could take surplus from the CSAs at Meanwood and Kirkstall, as well as farmers in or hopefully joining the Farm Group, who are looking for new crops/production models and routes to market.

Maddie explained that the Urban Agriculture Consortium have been looking at similar projects involving short, transparent supply chains. She mentioned the pilot project run by the Dynamic Food Board in Bath and NE

Somerset - the Future Food Framework, which is a tech platform that allows organisations to procure food from small farms. Sonja is attending the next meeting where this will be taken forward, and she is inviting Derek Prest from LCC Procurement to attend. Maddie also wondered if there could be a gleaning element to Simon's project - something she's led on in the past, and she mentioned Farm to Feed Us (with whom we have liaised in the past via Paul Chalmers). **Tom to call a meeting of interested parties to discuss with Simon [Done].**

## **OTHER ACTIVITY /FUNDING OPTIONS**

Please sign the **food charter!** <https://foodwiseleeds.org/leeds-food-charter/> (Sonja to send link to Polly to promote this via the climate emergency newsletter) [Done].

If anyone wants to sign up to the new **FoodWise newsletter**, please let Sonja know - it's going out later this week.

Dan reported that **IE Garforth** are ramping up their activity. They have established an agreement with Northern Rail to install raised beds at Garforth and East Garforth stations, and have plans to move on to Micklefield and Crossgates - and beyond.

Paola advises that she's pitched the idea of creating a Public, Private, Research and Innovation Partnership to enable food production in Leeds using **innovative technologies** in vertical farms.

Rosie shared the following **link:** [https://climatefringe.org/events/social-environmental-and-public-health-benefits-of-growing-food/?fbclid=IwAR23YcuhDP-dDzTQe\\_6MkB0g\\_g8qsyjxf9ESJ7LysgChJ8io8kiW39VMdeA](https://climatefringe.org/events/social-environmental-and-public-health-benefits-of-growing-food/?fbclid=IwAR23YcuhDP-dDzTQe_6MkB0g_g8qsyjxf9ESJ7LysgChJ8io8kiW39VMdeA)

Sue Ottley-Huges advised that there is **Covid money** [<https://www.grantsonline.org.uk/coronavirus.html>] available to support mental health initiatives, and gardening is one of the approved activities. FOSH are working with Near Neighbours and Hope Beyond, and Sue is willing to assist anyone interested with writing bids etc. Tom can supply Sue's phone number.

Alan Thornton from the Fruit Work Co-op remains keen to develop a catch-all bid to DEFRA's **Green Recovery Challenge Fund**, <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/agroforestry-and-the-basic-payment-scheme>, and create a Leeds version of what Kindling are doing. **This is something we will pick up at the AGM.**

The **Farm Forum** currently has 8 members - we now need to recruit more actual farmers.

The **Yorkshire Food Group** now has 21 members - recent arrivals being Simon from Sustainable Communities Alliance CIC, Wakefield, and Catherine from Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust.

## **NEXT MEETING**

**AGM Monday 22nd Feb - 4.00 pm. All welcome - please attend.**