

Dig In

Community Food Growing in West Lancashire

New Allotment Site at Appley Bridge

A new allotment site in Appley Bridge is testament to the determination of local people to grow their own, against the odds! Over last winter, a group of potential allotmenters met to discuss the logistics of creating the new site on land owned by Appley Bridge Community Association. The site has been carved out of The Meadows—a mainly wooded area alongside the canal on the edge of the village. With help from the Community Food Growing Project and West Lancs Allotment Federation, they set up Appley Bridge Allotment Society (ABAS) and recruited interested residents.



The land had previously been used as part of a linoleum factory and helped by grant from the West Lancs Community Food Growing project, the group arranged for the soil to be tested for any potential contaminants. When the results showed no pollutants, the group quickly carved out the 16 microplots in time to start planting in March. Despite there being no vehicle access (the site is reached by walking along the towpath) and no security fencing, the ploholders are celebrating a highly successful first growing season.



The piece of land also has considerable potential for the development of nature trails and picnic areas due to its beautiful location and the Community Association is exploring ways of developing and funding this part of the project. For more info go to: www.appleybridgeca.org.uk/Meadows.html

Launch of Eco Centre

A new eco-therapy project is to be launched at the former Red Apple Nursery in Newburgh. Run by a consortium led by Lancashire Mind, the project will provide a unique facility to support individuals through eco-therapy and horticultural activities to improve their mental health and general wellbeing, and to gain a range of skills, confidence and educational qualifications. The site will be run as a commercial nursery and there are plans to develop a fruit garden, orchard and nuttury. Alongside the horticultural and agricultural activities, there is also potential for development of a new allotment site.

You are invited to hear more about the plans at a **Public Launch of the project on Thursday 20th September at 12 noon**, at Cobbs Brow Lane, Newburgh, WN8 7SF

For more information, ring 01257 463 012 or 08453 054 254 or email: info@theecocentre.org.uk



September 2012

West Lancs Community Food Growing Project supporting local people to grow their own food

Report from West Lancs Allotments Federation



West Lancashire
Allotment's Federation

On 9th June WLAF representatives attended the National Allotment Society (NSALG) annual general meeting, this year held at Ryton Gardens Coventry, the home of Garden Organic. The morning was set aside for a series of speakers. These presentations included one from Chris Zijdeveld, President of the International Allotment movement. The formal AGM followed after lunch. A full report can be seen on the web at www.nsalg.org.uk.

Earlier in the year WLAF received a grant from the Co-operative Society, to fund some of its costs in supporting new allotment groups across the borough. To publicise this, the Co-op did a photo-shoot with ourselves and one of these new groups—Appley Bridge Allotment Society (see photo below). Look out for items including these pictures, in your local press during the coming months.

The big local event of this summer should have been the Green Fayre but this had to be cancelled due to our wonderfully wet weather. So WLAF put all of its resources into the 'Good Life Show' organised by BTCV at Haigh Hall Wigan on 7th August. WLAF set up its tables in the grand ballroom, spread the good word about allotments in West Lancashire and ran another successful vegetable tombola. Check out the photos on our website: <http://wlaf.btck.co.uk/Gallery/2012HaighHall>. If you haven't been to Haigh Hall lately pop over and take a look at their regenerated Walled Garden, which is now a working kitchen garden.



New Grant Scheme for Gardening Projects

A new grant scheme was launched this year by the North of England Horticultural Society. The Society is inviting community groups and charities based in the north of England to apply for grants of between £100 and £2,000 to undertake gardening projects and activities in the community. (If you are a newly formed group and are unable to provide accounts to support your application, the maximum grant you can apply for is £500).

The Society organises the Harrogate Flower Shows and all profits from the shows are returned to the charity and used to promote gardening and horticulture in the North of England.

For more information, go to: www.flowershow.org.uk/about-nehs/nehs-grants-scheme/
The closing date for applications is 30 November 2012.

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Community Food Growing Project News

We are pleased to report that the West Lancs Community Food Growing Project has been extended for another year. The project had been due to finish at the end of September 2012 but additional funding has enabled the work of the project to continue for another 12 months. The main aims of the project for this final year are to help any new sites and projects get up and running. Other work will include establishing a sustainable model of support to WLAF to help them become the lead promoters of Community Food Growing after September 2013 and to continue the production of Dig In newsletters.

Schools Growing Project News

A further seven schools have joined the project this year and have been provided with raised beds, adding to the 18 already set up in 2010. Two new part-time School Mentors have joined the Community Food Growing Project team to work alongside John Hutchison, who started the schools project in 2010. Terry Lake is working with three schools - St Edmunds in Skelmersdale, All Saints Appley Bridge, and Holmeswood - and Claire Cooper who starts this month will work with four schools - Bishop Martin and Elm Tree, both in Skelmersdale, Crawford Village School, and Aughton St Michael's.

The Schools project will run until July next year, and will finish with a 'Celebration of Growing Schools' event scheduled for July 4th 2013.

Community Food Growing Project DVD

The DVD about the Community Food Growing Project that some of you kindly took part in has now been finished. We are really pleased with the end result and the film should be available on our website from 20th September.



The West Lancs Community Food Growing Project aims to get more people involved in growing their own food and eating more healthily. We are working with local communities and schools to set up community food growing initiatives and providing help in finding the land (and funds) that might be needed. **We are keen to hear from anyone interested in growing their own food with others in West Lancs. Please get in touch!**

Martin Trengove
Debbie Shepton
John Hutchison,
Clare Cooper
& Terry Lake

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Keep up to date at our website: www.wlcvs.org/index.php/services/community-gardening



West Lancashire Council for
Voluntary Service



Central Lancashire



West Lancashire
Local Strategic Partnership



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