

Dig In

Community Food Growing in West Lancashire

New Shoots wins Prestigious Award

Hesketh with Becconsall Parish Council's vision to develop a delightful area of green space for the local community to enjoy has been recognised less than a year since the New Shoots Permaculture Community Garden was created. Based originally on a design by Groundwork North West, the garden sits within the Hesketh Bank Allotment Site and features a fully accessible path around the central community space with a wildflower meadow and forest garden. A wildlife pond, apiary, growing beds, polytunnel and an allotment area have all been developed for the whole community to enjoy and learn about permaculture with its emphasis on growing food organically.

Inspired by the Offshoots Permaculture Garden in Burnley, the Parish Council provided funding to match a grant from the Lancashire Environmental Fund (LEF). Work began last January and was completed in March and the project was one of 12 out of 60 short listed for an award at the Lancashire Environmental Fund's annual event. Despite some very stiff competition, the New Shoots Permaculture Garden was awarded the Lancashire Environmental Fund 2013 Best Practice Award for Open Spaces and Recreation—and presented with a beautiful hand painted glass plaque (see right).

Rob Yates, Chair of New Shoots Permaculture Association said, "Lots of hard work has been put in by a small number of dedicated volunteers to get to this stage. We now have a fantastic community facility for local people to enjoy. Anyone who wants to get involved will be made most welcome. We will be having Volunteer Days on the third Sunday of the month starting next January"

For more photos of this project, go to:
<http://simalbum.smugmug.com/Allotment/Permaculture-Site>



December 2013

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

New direction for Community Food Growing Project



After the success of the last 4 years in helping to treble the number of allotments in West Lancs, the Community Food Growing project is shifting its focus in this its last year of operation, to encouraging people to eat more veg and fruit.

The focus of this new direction will be the most deprived areas in Skelmersdale where health outcomes are not as good as elsewhere in the Borough. Two options are currently being considered. The first involves setting up a mobile 'pop up shop' aimed at taking fresh fruit and vegetables into the heart of the estates in Skelmersdale and selling the produce from community centres and other key venues. The second option is to look at encouraging the existing retailers and corner shops on the estates to stock more fresh fruit and vegetables, displaying the produce more attractively and prominently. Both schemes would aim to increase local consumption by making produce available locally and at affordable prices. Either scheme would need to be

supported by a 'cook and eat' type training programme aimed at showing families how fresh fruit and vegetables can be best prepared and served both appetizingly and economically.

The Community Food Growing Project will be researching the viability of this project over the next 6 months, developing a sustainable business plan and attracting the start up funding needed so that a programme could be launched in the summer / autumn of 2014.

Potato Day - Save the Date - 1st Feb 2014

West Lancashire Allotment Federation is holding a Potato Day on Saturday 1st February 2014 at the Concourse Shopping Centre Skelmersdale from 9.30am to 3.30pm and will have for sale over 100 varieties of potatoes, as well as veg and flower seeds, fruit bushes and trees, onion sets, garlic, and rhubarb.

Last year's Potato Day was very successful and exceeded expectations. The event enabled strong networking between groups and reached out to get new support for the federation. The fundraising is not the primary focus on this type of event but absolutely necessary and we exceeded our expectations. We have doubled our monies from previous years.

The real success was the number of people that turned out. We reached across the whole of West Lancashire and we had a good turnout from near and far. We had strong interest and questions from people in Skelmersdale and people bought potatoes to grow both in allotments and in bins in the back garden. There was a lot of enquiries about allotments and local food growing and also people asking for assistance with food supply for local community group and local food banks.

We hope Skelmersdale Library will again have a stand to encourage reading and supply books on allotments while enrolling new members. We also hope to bring in the local food initiative and other local groups to make the day more special.

Steve Martin



West Lancashire
Allotment's Federation

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Looking for grant funding?

Green Partnership Awards

Green Partnership Awards (GPA) are a partnership between Lancashire County Council, District Councils and city councils (not including Rossendale currently) supporting small scale environmental improvement projects carried out by community groups and organisations. Projects such as open space improvements, food growing, tidying up small derelict sites, tree planting, community gardens, enhancing access to countryside etc can be funded through this award.

Grants are available for 2013/14 and are typically at a maximum of £500, paid directly to the community group/organisation. If you are interested please [click here](#) . For more information please contact Mark Reynolds, Environmental Projects Officer, on Tel 01772 534122.

Grow Wild Community Sites Funding

Funding is available for local organisations across the UK to develop places where local people use UK native plants to create a space for everyone to enjoy by giving neglected and uncared-for sites and spaces a new lease of life.

Applications close on **6 January 2014**. See website: www.growwilduk.com/get-funding



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
Clare Cooper
& Terry Lake

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Keep up to date at our website: <http://wlcvs.org/index.php/community-food-growing>



West Lancashire Council for
Voluntary Service

NHS
Central Lancashire

West Lancashire
Local Strategic Partnership



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