

Dig In

Community Food Growing in West Lancashire

Allotments included in shortlist for Community Infrastructure funding - Have your say!

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) allows Councils in England and Wales to raise funds from developers who are undertaking new building projects in their area. The money collected can then be used to pay for a wide range of infrastructure which is needed to support new development.

In West Lancashire, five schemes have been shortlisted from over 100 projects for funding by March 2017. These include:

- New allotments in Skelmersdale
- New allotments in Burscough
- Improvements to public open space and associated car parking at Station Approach, Ormskirk
- Haskayne Cutting Nature Reserve
- Halsall Hall Memorial extension

The Council would like to hear your comments, so have your say as to whether **all** or just **some** of the above should be funded.

Read the details of the West Lancs Borough Council consultation on Community Infrastructure Funding Programme [here](#). You can complete the survey online [here](#).

Consultation closes at **5pm on Friday 30 October 2015**.

Get your free fruit trees - apply by October 23rd

To coincide with the Tree Council's 'National Tree Week', West Lancashire Borough Council is once again offering a free tree to residents of the borough. This year, residents can choose from three different types of fruit tree: plum (Victoria), pear (Conference), or apple (Laxton's Superb).

To apply for your free tree, you can: complete the [free tree](#) form or download a copy of the [2015 Free Tree Scheme leaflet \(PDF 1,675 kb\)](#), and complete the request form.

The [Council's website](#) has more information, or contact Roland Jones, Tree and Landscape Officer on 01695 585168 Email: roland.jones@westlancs.gov.uk



October 2015

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

Food Growing at the Ecumenical Centre

The community food growing group at the Ecumenical Centre in Skelmersdale has now been established for approximately two years and their plot within the church gardens has been up and running since last summer. There are now raised vegetable beds covering approximately half of the garden area to the side of the building and a wide range of produce has been successfully grown and enjoyed - including potatoes, onions, carrots, beans, peas, sweetcorn, parsnips, celery and a variety of salad crops.

The produce grown has been used by volunteers at the project, offered to people using the foodbank at the Ecumenical Centre and donated to the church as part of the harvest festival celebrations.

There is a small group of dedicated volunteers who have kept the project going during the past two years, but they would like to invite any new people to come along and join in to help them sustain the project for the future.

The Ecumenical Centre food growing group hold a meeting on a bi-monthly basis and the next one is at **2pm on Friday 4th December** in the chapel at the Ecumenical Centre.



Hallowscreeeeeeem

The new community food growing area at Quarry Bank Garden, Skelmersdale is hosting a Halloween event on Friday 30th October 5pm-8pm.

There will be Duck Apples, Trick or Treat, Spooky Walk, Zombie workshop, Face Painting, music, competitions (Best Dressed person and Best Pumpkin - bring it with you), food (stew, curry, and hotdogs) and stalls to buy from or promote your group.

If any group would like a stall, please contact Kathy Robson at Quarry Bank on 01695-50446.



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**It has been a great season
for Organic Veg Club**
(except for one incident -
but more of that later).



We started our veg box scheme this season selling about 25 boxes per week. This has been our ambition from day one and to achieve this in our second season after starting from a blank stubble field feels like a real achievement. Our boxes contained about 12 items per week with typical contents which included (in no particular order) potatoes, cabbage, lettuce, rocket, beetroot, broad beans, mange tout peas, strawberries, blackcurrants, kohlrabi, celeriac, spring onions, leaf beet, rainbow chard and many others.

Another ambition that we are currently working on is to change our organisation into a CIC or Community Interest Company, a form of not for profit business that ensures tangible community benefits. The new name will be 'Burscough Community Farm' and we feel this gives a better representation of who we are and will help us to achieve our goals.

We suffered a major setback on Saturday 3rd of October when the level of the Rufford Branch of the canal rose greatly, cascading down the bank and flooding most of our market garden. It put most of the crops that we were harvesting under 6 inches of water and has brought this season's box scheme to a premature halt. We didn't feel that we could sell these vegetables and so this has caused us a substantial loss in revenue.

Overall though we had a great season and we will be working over the winter to make the next one even better. We have hundreds of trees to plant, a barn that needs walls and lots of planning to get busy on. We also have our new polytunnel for next season which will give us a great start on getting our early crops in the ground.

Neil Hickson - Co-ordinator

Web: www.organicvegclub.co.uk

Twitter: @organicvegclub

Facebook: www.facebook.com/organicvegclub

A horizontal collage of various fresh vegetables including artichokes, chard, pea pods, corn, pumpkins, a yellow bell pepper, red chili peppers, and cabbages. The word "October 2015" is overlaid in large white letters.

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Quarry Bank update

Growing for the RHS Tatton Show!

The WEA (Workers Education Association) students grew plants and vegetables this summer at Quarry Bank, Skelmersdale for the WEA Field to Fabric garden at the 2015 RHS Tatton Show. The garden was inspired by the Lancashire Textile Industry and was funded with support from the Heritage Lottery Fund, Lancashire County Council Museum service and the WEA. The students at Quarry Bank grew teasels, sunflowers, carrots, beetroots, onions and rhubarb, which are all plants that have been used in the textile industry. The garden received a bronze medal and was visited by many people attending the show who were intrigued by the concept. Some of the students were lucky enough to win tickets to visit the exhibit and were impressed by the way their work and effort was used.



After the show the garden was dismantled and the plants, trees and willow structures were shared between Helmshore Mills Textile Museum and Quarry Bank. For further information visit the facebook page: Field to Fabric, twitter: @FieldtoFabric and Instagram: @FieldToFabric.

A Midsummer Night's Dream at Quarry Bank

Taking advantage of the Indian Summer, Dream-makers Drama Society staged 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' on the evenings of 8th, 9th and 10th September in the gardens at Quarry Bank. Playing to capacity audiences, the actors were brilliant and had a fantastic time performing their own unique interpretation of Shakespeare's play. Special thanks must go to the team of volunteers at Quarry Bank who worked incredibly hard to make sure that the pathways were re-established and the gardens looked at their very best.



Get your own Rudolf the reindeer

A herd of garden reindeers will be ready shortly at Quarry Bank in time for Christmas at a cost of £20 each. These are made by volunteers at Quarry Bank Community Garden from invasive trees felled on site (on the advice of Lancashire Wildlife Trust and the Lancashire County Council Environmental Projects Officer). All proceeds from reindeer sales will be used to purchase materials, seeds, compost etc for the project.

If you would like to reserve a reindeer, contact Kathy Robson at Quarry Bank on 01695 50446 or Dave Ord on 0780 580 3065



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Resources

Free trees for school, community and youth groups

The Woodland Trust has free tree packs to give away to schools and community groups. They welcome applications from all kinds of different groups such as resident associations, sports clubs, parish councils, scouts, guides and many more.

Next deadline for applying is January 6th 2016 (but this may be brought forward if demand is high)
www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/plant-trees/in-your-community/

Grow Wild funding for community groups

Grow Wild is awarding funding of £1,000 to £4,000 to community groups that want to bring people together to transform a communal space by sowing and growing UK native plants.

Apply now to be one of the 2016 community projects. The closing date for applications is 1 December 2015. Successful projects will be awarded funding in March 2016.

Read the [community project application guidance](#) to find out more and request an application form. All of their funded community groups have a dedicated [profile page](#) to share their journey and achievements. Take a look at the inspiring Grow Wild network of 150 community projects that were funded in 2014 and 2015.

Looking for Christmas presents?

The book 'Plant Veg, Grow a Revolution' tells the inspiring, humorous and often moving story of Incredible Edible Todmorden. With interviews, photographs, recipes and more, it describes how a group of ordinary people started a movement that is rippling out across the world. www.incredible-edible-todmorden.co.uk/blogs/how-to-get-your-own-copy-of-plant-veg-grow-a-revolution-the-story-of-iet

Ways to keep children keen on growing

The RHS has a wealth of resources for schools/ community groups/ anyone looking for ways of keeping their children keen on growing: <https://schoolgardening.rhs.org.uk/resources>



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Resources for schools



Biodome Systems have launched an exciting new opportunity for schools to apply for a 100% fully funded, state of the art biodome that will easily accommodate a class of 32. For more information, go to: <http://biodomesystems.com/>



StormClad have developed a delightful interactive guide on what to grow when: <http://stormclad.co.uk/gardening/>



Countryside classroom has a wealth of information – including resources tying in with school key stages: www.countrysideclassroom.org.uk/



Training courses in the NW for schools: <https://schoolgardening.rhs.org.uk/Training-courses-and-events/Search?region=18&page=1>



Polli:Nation Programme for Schools has been developed by the school grounds charity, Learning through Landscapes, to support schools in helping to protect the future of the UK's seriously dwindling bee population. School clusters in the UK can apply for funding of up to £4,000 to enable teachers, children and volunteers to be trained to make the necessary changes to their school grounds to create habitats. Apply online by **November 5th 2015** to start a project in January 2016. Please see website: www.ltl.org.uk/pollination/

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
Rachel Wheble

CVS Project Co-ordinator
CVS Community Support
CVS School Mentor

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



West Lancashire Council for
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